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NEWS SERVICE FOR WEEKLIES

U. S. Department of Agriculture

Special to Extension Editors

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All States

Good Taste Pays in the Dairy Business

Good quality milk tastes--and smells--good. These are the standards by which the customer judges the milk he buys, and if he is not pleased he soon changes his source of supply.

It pays a dairyman to give his own milk a regular taste test, suggests _____. Early detection of a bad flavor or odor, and prompt efforts to remove its cause, can save more serious troubles that are almost certain to follow if ill-flavored milk is marketed.

In a bulletin entitled "Judging and Scoring Milk," the Agricultural Marketing Service of the U. S. Department of Agriculture has listed all the common off-flavors that occur in milk, and their causes. Here are some of the undesirable tastes. The cause points to the cure.

An acid, sour taste--the most familiar problem--is caused by bacterial growth. Faster cooling or better sanitation is needed.

A bitter taste may be caused by strong feeds or weeds, or by conditions in the milk of cows late in the lactation period. Less frequently it results from bacterial growth in milk held several days at low temperatures.

"Cowy" flavors may result from a poorly cleaned or poorly ventilated barn, or a cow that is not feeling up to par. A cow that breathes impure air will pass the odors along in her milk.

Disinfectant not completely washed out of containers may be tasted in the milk held in those same containers.

As experienced dairymen know, wild onion or garlic in the pasture can render milk undesirable for use. Some other strong feed flavors may be overcome by feeding strong-flavored feeds after milking.

Milk may taste malty if it is not properly cooled or the milking equipment is not properly cleaned.

A metallic flavor may occur if milk comes into contact with corrodible metal such as rusty milk cans or lids. Contact with such metals as copper or iron may cause an oxidized taste, one of the flavors most troublesome to dairymen.

Musty feed or stagnant water may cause a musty flavor. A salty flavor could point to mastitis.

Copies of the bulletin "Judging and Scoring Milk" may be obtained from the Office of Information, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington 25, D. C. (or from a State or local source).

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Carrots Tell Success Story for Prepackaged Foods

Prepackaging of food is generally thought of as an extra service to the consumer. And it is frequently used as an explanation for the rising costs involved in marketing farm products.

Both these ideas are sound, says _____, but they overlook the fact that packaging may also be of great advantage to the producer and seller of farm goods. Take prepackaged carrots, for example.

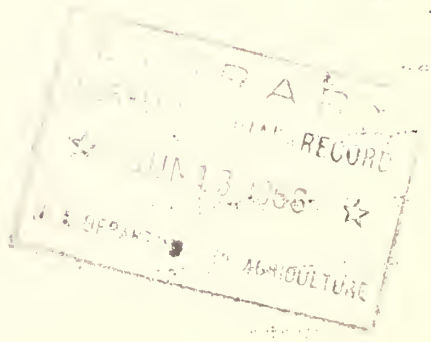
As recently as 1951, a scant 1 percent of fresh carrots was sold prepackaged. Now more than 85 percent are sold this way. This landslide is due in part to advantages to the grower, the shipper, and the retailer, as well as to the consumer, according to _____.

Prepackaged carrots are topped by the grower as they are harvested, so there are no tops to pay freight on and no need for ice to keep the useless tops cool. This cuts transportation costs.

Retailers report handling costs reduced from 14 cents per sales dollar, and waste and spoilage losses reduced from 8 percent to less than 1 percent. Space required for handling carrots is also down, and the film bags reduce spoilage and extend shelf life, making possible a continuous supply of fresh carrots.

Housewives, too, prefer the prepackaged carrots because they are fresher, crisper, cleaner, and there are no tops to dispose of.

But the trend to prepackaged carrots didn't happen by accident. Ten years of research by the U. S. Department of Agriculture cooperating with the carrot industry led to adoption of efficient and money-saving packaging methods, machinery, equipment, and production-line arrangements. Prepackaged carrots show how marketing research can lead to benefits all along the line from producer to consumer.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Survey Shows Turkey Producers Prefer to Sell on a Grade Basis

Selling farm products by grade, rather than on an average price-per-unit basis, is a means of making good quality pay, says _____. Many farmers prefer this method of selling.

In a survey by the U. S. Department of Agriculture of 32 Minnesota and Wisconsin turkey producers, 27 said they preferred to sell by grade and they usually made more money that way. Only 3 liked to sell on a flock-run average price basis. The remaining 2 were undecided.

Fifteen of the growers questioned stated that selling by grade is the only fair way. Of these, 12 said that they had increased the number of Grade A turkeys in their flocks since selling by grade.

This survey was part of a continuing study by the Agricultural Marketing Service to determine the advantages and disadvantages to both producers and processors of the methods growers use to dispose of their birds.

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Good Market Seen for Forest Products

U. S. Department of Agriculture experts forecast a long-range increase in demand for timber. By 1975, they say, demand may increase by 25 to 40 percent.

This estimate, according to the Department's Forest Service, may prove to be too conservative if population increases are more than presently anticipated. In either event, demand for timber is expected to outrun supply within a few decades, particularly for preferred softwood species, such as Douglas fir, and for high quality timber.

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USDA Laboratories to Explore New Frontiers in Agricultural Science

Basic research--the kind of uncharted scientific exploring which leads to great scientific discoveries--is as necessary for moving back the frontiers of agricultural knowledge as it is for the conquest of space. The United States has made great strides in agriculture by applying the results of basic research--much of it done in other countries--toward the solution of practical farm problems. But scientific leadership today requires more attention to the frontiers of knowledge.

U. S. scientists are moving toward such leadership in the field of agriculture, which, after all, embraces all of life's processes and their relationship to our physical universe.

The Agricultural Research Service of the U. S. Department of Agriculture has established two new laboratories at its Beltsville, Md., research center to be devoted to basic research in the fields of mineral nutrition and plant physiology. Several others, aptly called "pioneering" laboratories, have been approved and are in the planning stage. These will explore the fields of microbiological chemistry, seed proteins, plant fibers, insect diseases, the basic physiological nature of insects, and the processes by which blood fights disease by the formation of antibodies.

Chief chemist of the Pioneering Laboratory for Mineral Nutrition is S. B. Hendricks, a member of the National Academy of Sciences widely known for his contributions to soil science and mineralogy. Research leader in the Pioneering Laboratory for Plant Physiology is H. A. Borthwick, codiscoverer with Hendricks of light-sensitive pigments which cause many plants to respond to light in flowering, seed germination, and other behavior.

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A Tight Cover Is Essertial For Good Silage From Horizontal Silos

A tight cover and a firm weight over the surface are important for cutting costly surface spoilage in trench and other low-cost horizontal silos, according to _____.
(State or local authority)

Many farmers have had disappointing results in putting up silage in trenches, bunkers and horizontal stacks, says _____. Inadequate packing and surface exposed to the air have been the cause of their troubles. Spoilage caused by bacteria that are active in the presence of oxygen, and leaching by rain and snow, combine to make poor quality silage.

Experiments at the U. S. Department of Agriculture's Beltsville, Md., research center show how modern plastic sheetings can seal off the air effectively and keep down spoilage. Scientists at Beltsville have obtained as good results with horizontal silos as farmers generally get by using the best packing and sealing methods with upright silos.

Only 5 percent spoilage occurred where a 4-millimeter polyethylene sheet with heat-sealed seams was used on a shallow stack of chopped, untreated orchardgrass. This plastic cover was weighted down with soil at only the edges and center of the stack.

Orchardgrass was also successfully ensiled in bunkers covered with neoprene-coated nylon. Eight pounds of sodium metabisulfite preservative was added per ton of grass. Covers were weighted with sawdust all over and railroad ties at the edges. The silage was good all the way to the surface except for a very small amount of spoilage next to the wall.

Spoilage was also exceedingly low in corn silage packed in a shallow stack with gently sloping sides. This was covered with several pieces of used vinyl and weighted all over with sawdust. The easy slopes were important because the silage could be packed well by driving a tractor over it repeatedly in all directions, and the film could be continuously weighted on the slopes.

Poor results were obtained with 54-inch wide sheets of vinyl plastic joined at the seams with pressure-sensitive tape and weighted only around the edges of the bunker. Though tight at first, the seams puckered later and allowed small air leaks to open up. About 31 percent of the original silage was lost.

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Spring Is Good Time to Plan Forestland Improvements

Now is a good time for small forest owners to lay plans for improvement cutting in their woodlands, suggests _____. The cutting itself can be postponed, if desirable. In early summer fresh-cut stumps are least likely to sprout and foliage can help in making final decisions about which trees should be taken out.

A survey in 1945 by the U. S. Department of Agriculture showed that 57 percent of all commercial forest land in the United States was in small, private tracts, averaging 62 acres. Only 4 percent of the owners of these small woodlands were cutting their timber wisely, leaving the forest to grow and to improve. Almost three-fourths were leaving cut-over land with no timber values left, where regrowth would be difficult or impossible.

Better planning would greatly increase profits from these small holdings, according to _____, and at the same time yield important benefits in protection of soil and water resources.

To allow room for young, well-shaped trees to grow to their best potential, it is important to weed out overage and surplus trees. This means regular removal of diseased and damaged trees, branchy and badly shaped trees, vines, and poorer species. Many of these cuts can be made to pay for themselves through the yield of firewood, pulpwood, fence posts, poles or even sawlogs. And much improvement cuttings will "pay-off" eventually by adding to the value of the timber that remains.

Overmature trees that are no longer growing at a profitable rate should be harvested before they rot or are damaged. These can usually

be recognized by flattened crowns, thin foliage, and somewhat lighter bark. Fast-growing trees with straight trunks need room to continue their healthy and profitable growth.

County agents and local foresters (or other State source) will give advice on improvement cutting and possible markets for cut lumber. This help has been provided through State and Federal funds so that the 4,200,000 farmers and city dwellers who own small forests can improve their profits and, at the same time, help to protect an important national resource.

General information on managing a small forest is given in Farmers' Bulletin 1989. For a single, free copy of this bulletin, write to the Office of Information, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington 25, D. C. (or a State source).

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Spring Pruning Can Improve Quality and Value of Forestland

Early spring--just before the growing season--is the best time to prune trees, _____ reminds _____ owners of small (State or local authority) (area) forests who are aiming at good timber markets.

Whether it pays to prune or not depends upon the general condition of the forest and its trees. Pruning is a slow and tedious job, but in an otherwise well-managed forest it helps to produce the large, straight, clear logs that command top prices in timber sales. County agents and local foresters are ready to advise small forest owners on management practices--including pruning and how to go about it.

In general, trees at first pruning should be fairly young, 4 to 6 inches in diameter, so the branches to be taken off will be no more than 2 inches thick. At this age cuts heal fast and leave only small knots, says _____.

Pruning cuts should be close to the trunk because stubs take too long to heal and may let in rot or insects. Not more than two-thirds of the total height of the tree, nor more than the lower third of the live crown, should be pruned at once. A second pruning in a few years may be necessary to get a clear 16-foot log or, on the best timber, to get long clear poles or two clear logs.

A fairly heavy pruning saw, with a blade 12 to 18 inches long, is the best tool. Pruning high branches with a ladder does the best job, but a pruning saw on a long pole may be safer and more convenient.

In forestry, as in other businesses, high quality products sell easiest and bring the highest prices. Good lumber from large, straight clear logs can always command a market, says _____, because good timber is scarce. Farmers own about a third of U. S. commercial forest area, but these lands produce only about one-seventh of the Nation's saw timber. Better management would greatly increase the profit possible from these farm woodlands.

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Trees Are A Farm Crop That Has Never Been Surplus

Private land owners--industries and individuals--planted almost a billion trees in the United States last year. This year, under the impetus of the Soil Bank's Conservation Reserve program, designed to encourage retirement of farmland from production of surplus crops, even more trees will be planted. The 1958 terms of the Conservation Reserve provide special financial incentives to farmers who contract to plant trees on some or all of their crop land.*

Trees are a profitable farm crop, says _____. Properly managed, they will yield a substantial annual income after initial establishment and Conservation Reserve payments under a 10-year contract have run out. U. S. Department of Agriculture experts predict a rising increase in demand for timber--25 to 40 percent more will be needed by 1975 to meet the needs of a growing population.

Farmers and other land owners who are interested in joining this general movement to replant America's forests and thereby replenish a dwindling national resource should get in touch with their county agricultural agent or local Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Committee, suggests _____.

County agents can give general advice about local prospects for forest enterprises and about State and Federal programs that offer financial and technical aid to tree planters. ASC Committees will explain the terms of the Conservation Reserve Program and the Agricultural Conservation Program.

Technical advice about species of trees to plant, planting methods, and other aspects of forest management can be obtained from local foresters, county agents, and, in some areas, Soil Conservation Service technicians.

The sign-up period for tree planting under the 1958 Conservation Reserve is open until April 15.

*Those States served by the Great Plains Conservation Program (Public Law 1021) may wish to include mention of it here and follow with general information about the value of shelterbelts.

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Keep Tree Seedlings Moist Before Planting

Tree seedlings must be kept moist from the time they leave the nursery until they are planted, _____ (State or local authority) reminds _____ (area) land owners who have ordered trees to be delivered in time for spring planting this year.

A good root system is essential to successful planting and, unless care is taken, roots dry out very rapidly and are injured, warns _____.

With an upsurge of tree planting under the Soil Bank Conservation Reserve plan and other State and Federal programs to encourage rebuilding of forest reserves, many land owners without previous experience will be planting trees this spring. _____ advises these new foresters that seedlings should be watered immediately when they arrive from the nursery and planted as soon as possible. Stored in a cool place and kept moist, they will remain in good condition for several days.

Seedlings that must be kept for more than 4 or 5 days should be "heeled in" in moist soil. To do this, dig an open V-shaped trench. Then open the bundle of trees and spread the roots out along one side of the trench. Fill in with soil so all roots are covered and drench with water. Stamp down the soil for a firm covering and keep moist until planting.

On planting day, be sure to keep the roots covered with a damp material like wet moss, or keep them submerged in a puddle or bucket. Never allow the roots to be exposed to sun or wind, even for an hour.

County agents or local foresters will give advice about the best methods for planting trees on your land, says _____. They may also tell you where tree planting machinery can be rented.

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Fast Growing Trees Adapted to Your Land Are Best Bet in Forest Planting

Farmers and other land owners who are planning to restock cut-over woodlands or to plant trees on previously cultivated or idle land will find it pays to choose their species carefully. Like any other crop, trees thrive best and are most profitable when they are grown in locations and on soil to which they are well adapted.

This advice comes from _____ who adds that it usually
(State or local authority)
pays to plant trees that grow the fastest and are most salable in your locality.

Over a billion trees were planted last year on private lands in the United States. Even more are expected to be planted this year with the aid of State and Federal programs designed to encourage forest plantings. These programs provide for professional advice as well as financial aid to tree planters.

County agents, local foresters, Soil Conservation Service technicians, and other local advisers who serve your area can give valuable information on trees to plant, planting and cultivation methods and other phases of managing forests for profit, says _____.

In general, the cone-bearing evergreens (conifers) will grow where hardwoods will not--in worn-out fields and pastures, sandy areas, cut-over and burned-over woodlands and on shallow, dense or cloddy soil. Hardwoods grow well and are profitable in deep, rather loose, crumbly ground. All trees, but especially hardwoods, need water and do best where the soil absorbs it readily. Drought resistant species and special cultivation methods are needed in dry areas.*

Prospective markets for timber and other forest products that may be harvested from your land after the forest is established is another important consideration in planting trees, suggests _____. Some species will yield annual income from improvement cuttings (thinning) of lumber suitable for firewood, fenceposts, pulpwood, railroad ties, charcoal and other forest products long before the principal timber harvest is ready. The labor and time that a land owner can afford to invest in forest plantings before they begin to pay off should be considered in making a choice of trees.

Local advisers can be of great help in choosing and managing the trees best suited to your particular situation, says _____.

*You may wish to list species generally recommended for your area.

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Young Tree Plantations Need Care for Survival

Last year a record-breaking number of tree seedlings were planted in new forest plantations (or shelterbelts) in _____. Nursery orders for this spring indicate that even more will be planted this year.
(State)

_____ reminds owners of these new woodlands that a certain amount of care is needed to protect their investment. Most species of trees need to be cultivated for several years after planting; and all need some protection from fire, insects and disease, and wild and domestic animals.
(State or local authority)

County agents and local foresters (or other advisers in your State) are the best sources of information about how to deal with local problems and how to care for particular species of trees in any locality. State and Federal programs under which a great majority of seedlings are being planted provide for such technical help.

Where planted trees can be reached easily with a cultivator, cultivation for 2 or 3 years after planting will get them off to a good start and reduce losses,* says _____. Heavy sod almost always kills a hardwood plantation, and rank weed growth will overtop and smother newly planted trees.

As trees begin to establish themselves and cultivation is discontinued, weeds, grass and brush along the edges of fields and along roadsides should be cut or grazed before they dry up and become fire hazards. Any flammable trash should be cleaned up, and during long dry spells it may be wise to keep out hunters and other visitors. Local foresters may advise plowing firebreaks 4 to 6 feet wide to keep out grass fires.

Diseases and insects destroy more timber than fire. Much of this loss can be avoided by giving trees sufficient care to keep them growing vigorously. Any forest owner whose trees are being damaged seriously should promptly consult his county agent or local forester for advice about specific control measures.

Except in the naturally open forests of the West and the Southern coastal plain where there is an abundance of palatable forage, grazing forests is poor management. Livestock break off young trees or branches and disease and insects move into the wounds. County agents can give advice about control of rabbits, mice and other wild animals, where these are a problem.

*(Note to editors) In Plains States substitute: Young plantations must be cultivated on the prairies and other areas where moisture is low and the trees cannot be irrigated. In Southeastern States add: Slash and loblolly pine are exceptions, since cultivation encourages development of fusiform rust on trunks.

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Cut Feed Costs for Dairy Profit

Feed normally represents about one-half the cost of milk production. One effective way to increase dairy profits, suggests _____, is to cut feed costs.

Research points the way to do this by replacing some of the grain and concentrates usually fed to dairy cattle with more high-quality roughage.

At the U. S. Department of Agriculture's Beltsville, Md., research center, for instance, it was found that dairy heifers fed large quantities of good forage reached normal weights at 24 months of age with much less grain than is usually fed. In contrast to the 2,000 to 3,000 pounds of grain commonly consumed before first calving, the Beltsville heifers grew normally on 560 pounds of grain plus plenty of good forage.

The dairy nutritionists experimenting with this means of reducing the costs of raising dairy herd replacements discontinued milk feeding of the heifers at 60 days rather than the usual 6 months, and discontinued feeding grain at 9 months. The 9 Holstein and 25 Jersey calves were offered as much forage as they would eat after 10 days of age.

These studies indicate that it is important to maintain a high legume content in the roughage rations. Alfalfa hay was combined with other high quality roughages such as corn silage, timothy hay and corn silage, timothy hay and orchard grass-ladino hay, and bromegrass-ladino hay and corn silage.

Numerous other studies have shown how similar savings can be realized by substituting high-quality roughage for some of the grain and concentrates fed to milking herds, according _____. A study in Michigan showed that cost of feed could be reduced from 20 to 25 percent on average Michigan dairy farms--first by improving the quality of roughage and then feeding more roughage and less protein and grain. Producing 100 pounds of milk cost farmers who harvested and fed roughage of excellent quality 46 cents less than it cost those who used poor quality roughage.

Help in producing and preserving better roughages is available to any dairy farmer through his county agent and the dairy specialists located at _____, says _____.
(State College)

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Dairy Profits Depend Upon High Production Per Cow

A dairy farmer may have little control over the price he gets for his milk, but he does control--to a large degree--the cost of producing it. And profit is the difference between production costs and market prices, reminds _____.
(State or local authority)

The key to low-cost production in dairying, says _____, is high production per cow. For instance, records of the Dairy Herd Improvement Association for 1953 and 1954 show that feed costs alone for a cow producing only 4,000 pounds of milk per year amounted to about $3.15 for every 100 pounds of milk produced. By contrast, a cow producing 10,000 pounds per year consumed feed costing an average of $1.89 per 100 pounds of milk produced, even though this cow consumed more total feed.

Similar contrasts could be made between labor and housing costs for high and low producers. In every way the high producing cow is a more efficient animal.

Record keeping is essential to efficient dairy production, declares _____. Time and again it has been shown, when cows are put on record, that mere observation is not a reliable guide to an animal's production. Cows that are heavy producers early in the lactation period frequently drop down to a low daily record, while less impressive but regular producers may score much better by the end of a year.

A simplified, low-cost system known as the Weigh-a-Day-a-Month plan has been developed to help dairymen who have previously found record

keeping too expensive, too time-consuming, or too difficult. This new system which strips all but the bare essentials from record keeping is suitable for any size herd, but it is particularly useful to the dairyman with a herd of 14 cows or less. As the name implies, it calls for weighing the milk and feed of each cow on one day each month, recording this with other simple data about the animal on a form, and mailing the form to a county record center.

Computations are then made for the dairyman showing how his cows compare with local and national averages in feed consumption and production. On the basis of this information, he can cull low-producing, unprofitable animals, select the best ones for breeding higher-producing replacements, and do a better job of feeding each cow in accordance with her ability to produce.

This valuable aid to good management, according to _____, costs about 5 cents per cow per month. Any dairyman who is not now keeping records should ask his county agent about how he can join the Weigh-a-Day-a-Month plan, _____ advises.

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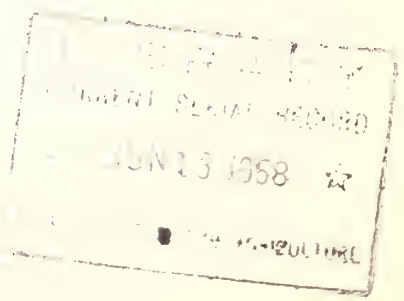

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Disease Can Steal Away Dairy Profits

A healthy herd is essential to efficient, profitable dairy production. Yet despite great strides that have been made in control methods, disease organisms continue to cut production and profits in many dairy herds, says _____ (State or local authority).

The most insidious thieves--those that cause the largest losses--are chronic diseases that slip in unnoticed and slowly eat away a cow's ability to produce efficiently, according to _____.

The largest single economic loss to dairymen is that caused by mastitis, or inflammation of the udder, says _____. Acute mastitis is easily detected and readily recognized; therefore it receives prompt treatment. But the chronic form, caused by many different organisms, is often not recognized because few observable symptoms develop. Damage to the secretory tissue occurs, however, and changes take place more or less gradually in the udder, depending upon the virulence of the infection. Eventually the cow becomes useless, but long before that her milk production and quality drops and she becomes an economic liability to her owner.

A herd that is known to be infected with mastitis or any other disease should be treated promptly by a veterinarian, says _____. But sanitary management practices are essential for preventing and controlling disease. These include such things as clean, dry bedding; adequate-sized stalls with partitions to protect cows from trampling; control of flies, rats and other disease carriers. Milking machines should be disinfected carefully, kept in good running order, and used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions to avoid injuries to the udders or introduction of disease germs.

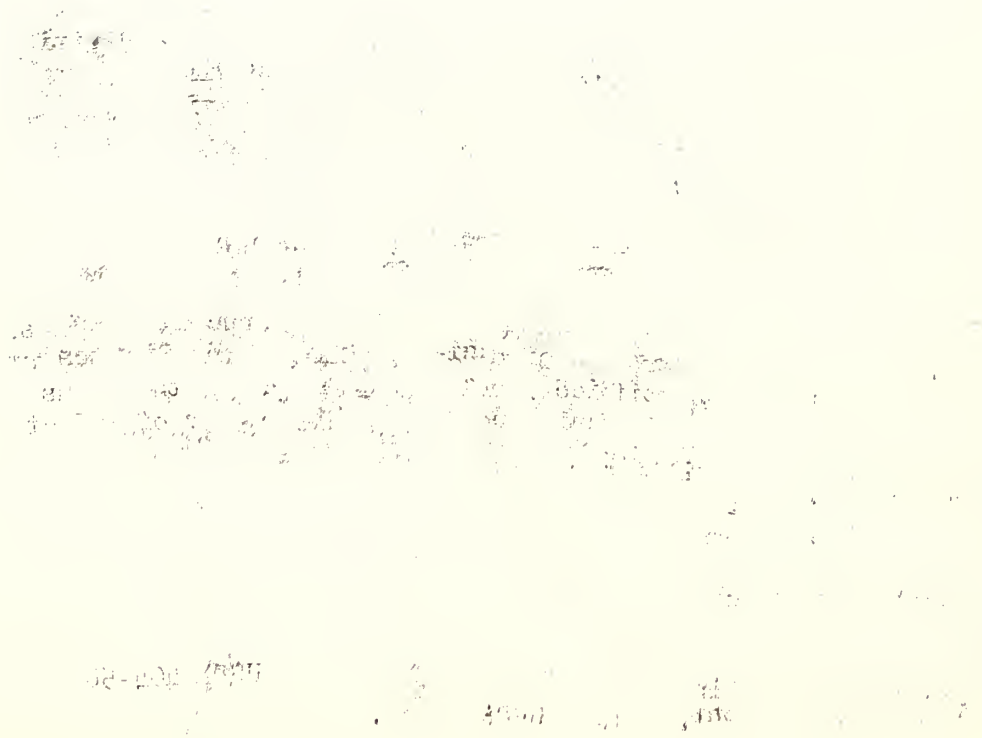
County agents and _____ State College specialists can help a dairy farmer cut losses from disease by closing any gaps in his sanitation practices.*

Meanwhile a Federal-State cooperative campaign to wipe out brucellosis is turning the tide against one of these thieves of dairy profits. Nine States ** have already been declared "modified certified brucellosis-free," meaning less than 1 percent infection in their cattle. But brucellosis (Bang's disease) still causes losses estimated at about $30 million a year. This, though the means for complete control--calfhood vaccinations, herd testing and slaughter of infected animals--are available to all dairymen.

* You may wish to mention Farmer Bulletin 1470, or other publication available from a State source.

** Maine, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Washington, Wisconsin, Delaware, Minnesota, Connecticut, and Vermont. Also Puerto Rico.

USDA 404-58



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Farm Fillers

Milk Is Moving in Bigger Bottles

More and more families are discovering the convenience of buying milk in larger containers. A newly-released report by the U. S. Department of Agriculture shows that 40 percent of family purchases of whole milk during November 1957 were in half-gallon containers, compared with 22 percent so purchased in November 1954. Almost 93 million quarts of whole milk were purchased for home use in gallon containers, almost half again the volume bought in gallons 3 years earlier.

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Proved Sires Are Improving Dairy Herds

Milk cows bred from 932 proved sires used by artificial dairy breeding associations in the United States during 1956 produced an average of 11,301 pounds of milk and 477 pounds of butterfat. This compares with an average production by the dams of these same cows of 10,600 pounds of milk and 438 pounds of butterfat. U. S. dairy herds are thus constantly being improved by use of sires known to pass high milk production ability along to their daughters, reports the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

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U. S. Broilers Sell Like Hotcakes in Switzerland

Broilers are now the fastest growing U. S. export to Switzerland, thanks to a new trade agreement between U. S. and Swiss businessmen. Nearly 7 million pounds of dressed poultry were consumed by this market last year--more than twice the 1956 total, reports the U. S. Department of Agriculture. Most of these were quick-frozen, ready-to-cook broilers sold through city food stores with refrigerated counters.

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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Ark., Calif., Colo., Iowa, Kan., Mo., Neb., Ohio, Okla., and Tex.

Quality Means Cash in Dehydrated Alfalfa

Dehydrated alfalfa is one of the farm products for which price is directly related to quality. Since it is used in feed formulas that must meet certain specified nutrient standards, the price of dehydrated alfalfa is based primarily on its protein and vitamin A content. Seventeen percent protein with 100,000 units of vitamin A per pound is standard.

Research at the Kansas agricultural experiment station shows several ways to obtain and maintain the highest quality consistent with the best price.

Most important is growing the best adapted and most disease-resistant variety of alfalfa for the area, because leaf spot and other diseases can appreciably reduce the nutrient content. In a test to show effects of heavy leaf spot in California alfalfa, the California common variety contained 12.9 percent protein and 96 parts per million of carotene (source of vitamin A). By contrast, Caliverde, a leaf spot resistant variety, had 18.4 percent protein and 204 parts per million of carotene.

Time of harvesting is another important factor, but here the producer must compromise between quality and quantity. Experiments indicate that returns are greatest when alfalfa is harvested during the first bloom. The protein count for first bloom cutting is slightly less than for a prebloom cutting, but the quantity is sufficiently bigger to justify the later cutting.

Another place that time counts is between cutting and dehydration. Here the shorter the time, the higher the quality of the finished product. And, also the faster alfalfa can be cooled after dehydration the higher the quality will be. Heat--either from the sun or driers in the plant--helps to destroy vitamin A content.

One big unsolved problem is how to maintain quality during storage. If the crop could be held for later sale, it would bring a better price--provided the quality was still good. But cash-value nutrients burn themselves up under ordinary storage conditions. An effective but harmless antioxidant that could be sprayed on the dried alfalfa would solve this problem, but thus far no satisfactory material for this purpose has been found.

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Black Plastic Mulch Increases Vegetable Yields

Mulching is an old and time-honored method--known to every experienced gardener--for controlling weeds and conserving moisture. Many materials--such as saw dust, straw, grass clippings, even shredded newspapers--are used with varying degrees of success. Something new and very effective for this purpose is black polyethylene film.

This black plastic, first tried at the Kentucky State Experiment Station, was tested on vegetable plots grown last year at the U. S. Department of Agriculture's Beltsville, Md., research center. It controlled virtually all weeds except nutgrass, which has sharp pointed leaves able to pierce the film. Thus only a small amount of hand weeding was necessary. In addition, the crops mulched with polyethylene during the dry 1957 season grew faster and larger and yielded more than similar plants grown without mulch.

To cut the cost of mulching home garden plots with plastic, the Beltsville specialists suggest that strips of the film may be used, rather than attempting to cover the whole garden surface. Directions come with the packets of film, which is available from most local garden and hardware stores.

The soil should be fertilized and thoroughly worked into a friable condition before it is covered with film and the plants set in place. If it is necessary to feed later, fertilizer in solution can be poured into the opening around each plant, through holes punched in the film, or along the edges of the covered plant bed--where it will soak in as rain does when it falls on the film.

The rather heavy silt loam soil at Beltsville became hard and packed last summer and so dry that plant growth was retarded in unmulched plots. But soil beneath the polyethylene mulch remained moist, porous and loose.

Mulched cabbage, broccoli, and lettuce plants all outweighed similar plants on clean cultivated land. And cucumbers, lima beans, snapbeans, and tomatoes yielded heavier crops when mulched with film. The tomatoes were particularly benefited. Mulched plants of Manalucie variety bore an average of $15\frac{1}{2}$ pounds of fruit per plant, while non-mulched plants bore only $9\frac{1}{2}$ pounds per plant.

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All States

Country Living Is Better Than Ever

In 1940 only 33 percent of farm households had electricity, 18 percent had piped running water, and 15 percent had mechanical refrigerators. By 1956, 94 percent of farm homes had electricity, 64 percent piped running water, and 90 percent had mechanical refrigerators.

These comparisons come from a recent study by the U. S. Department of Agriculture's Institute of Home Economics. On the basis of amount spent, the greatest gain in farm living standards is in the area of medical care, it was found. Farm families spent an average of $235 in 1955, as compared with $155 spent in 1941 (calculated on the basis of 1955 prices). In this category farm families approached the closest to city levels of spending.

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Lawn Grass Needs Feeding for Spring Growth

As soon as winter loosens its icy grip, the bluegrasses, fescues and other cool season lawn grasses awake to a period of rapid growth. Awake, that is, if sufficient plant food is available to stimulate them normally. A similar spurt may be expected in the fall, after a mid-summer rest.

Early spring and early fall are therefore the best times to fertilize these grasses, says _____. Applications at other times, especially during hot weather, may only stimulate crabgrass and other weeds.

Grasses are heavy nitrogen feeders, so the amount of fertilizer recommended is usually figured in terms of pounds of nitrogen per 1,000 square feet of lawn. Kentucky bluegrass and red fescues require 3 to 4 pounds of actual nitrogen per 1,000 square feet; Merion bluegrass requires about 6 pounds.

A complete fertilizer based on a 10-6-4 formula is 10 percent nitrogen, 6 percent phosphorus and 4 percent potash. A 100-pound sack of this fertilizer would contain 10 pounds of actual nitrogen--enough for about 3,000 square feet of lawn per year. This amount should be divided according to the number of applications made, which should be at least two.

Many types of fertilizer are available--some organic (derived from living things such as animal and vegetable tankage), and some inorganic (purely chemical in nature). Both types are effective plant foods and some commercial fertilizers are a mixture of these two. In general, the organic fertilizers, which cost more per unit of actual nitrogen, release their nutrients more slowly than the inorganic, thus giving more uniform stimulation to the grass over a longer period. Addition of organic material also improves the texture of most soils.

Some lawn owners may be interested in trying a relatively new, high-nitrogen, urea-form fertilizer. Sold under several different trade names, this fertilizer spreads easily and releases its nitrogen slowly. It will not burn grass leaves, doesn't overstimulate the plants, and is effective over a longer period than some of the older-type fertilizers. Since it contains at least 38 percent of actual nitrogen, a much smaller quantity is needed to provide the recommended amount.

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For Utah, Nev., Colo., Ariz., N.m., Wyo., Idaho, Calif.

It Pays to Haul Water to Sheep on the Range

Hauling water to sheep on western ranges can increase the owner's income. This is because sheep that get water every day without trailing long distances are healthier and make greater weight gains than sheep that go thirsty. Lamb crops too are larger, and more efficient use of range forage is possible.

Long time research (since 1935) at the Forest Service's Desert Experimental Range near Milford, Utah, shows the value of hauling water to range sheep and indicates the best methods for doing it.

Daily watering produces the best results, the Forest Service specialists have found. And water troughs should be moved to a new location after each watering. When troughs are not moved, the surrounding range soon becomes too heavily grazed and trampled until vegetation is killed. Then much of the advantage of daily watering is lost as the sheep have to travel greater and greater distances from forage to water.

During a 40-day experimental grazing period at the Desert Experimental Range in January and February, sheep supplied with water every day gained 3.4 pounds per head; those receiving water every second day gained 0.8 pound; and those watered only every third day lost .6 pounds per head. All these sheep had equal access to ample feed, and water was hauled to the areas being grazed so the sheep did not have to trail to water.

(Over)

The daily grazing should be planned, say the Forest Service specialists, and troughs placed ahead of the flock so sheep can graze quietly up to the water, drink, and move on to fresh feed. About 100-gallon-capacity troughs should be placed 20 to 30 feet apart on firm or gravelly soil so the sheep can reach water and move away afterward without crowding.

Trough storage and hauling-truck capacity should be large enough to care for the entire flock at one time. Otherwise the sheep become restless and trampling damage results. In cold weather water should be hauled shortly before it is used, to avoid freezing. If water is too cold, sheep will not drink enough to quench their thirst, just as they get insufficient water from snow banks.

On winter range about 2,000 gallons of water per day is usually sufficient for a band of 2,000 to 3,000 ewes. If the same band is watered every other day, they will drink about 4,000 gallons at each watering.

Information about portable metal troughs, water tanks, and trucks used in the Forest Service research, and other details about their findings, are included in Leaflet 423 of the U. S. Department of Agriculture. For a single free copy of this publication, entitled Hauling Water to Sheep on Western Ranges, write to: Office of Information, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington 25, D. C. (or to some State source).

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Frame Your House; Don't Hide It With Foundation Plants

Your foundation planting can add or detract from the value of your house. So it pays in many ways to consider carefully before buying plants for this purpose, says _____.
(State or local authority)

Overplanting is the most common error made by amateur landscape gardeners, according to _____. Perhaps the reason for this, he suggests, is a natural impatience to fill the empty spots quickly--before the proper-size plants have a chance to mature. Hence the tendency to plant too much and to choose materials that grow fast, without regard to their ultimate size.

For owners of new homes that need lanscaping, and for those with the courage to root out past mistakes and redesign their landscape plan, _____ lists a few general principles that will help in achieving a pleasant and harmonious effect at the front of the house.

A good general guide for your foundation planting can be reached by drawing two lines, beginning at the middle of your front doorstep and running one line to each front corner of the house ending at a height half way between the eaves and the ground. You might draw this on a snapshot of the house, or on a line drawing made to the proper scale; or you might anchor a string at the middle of the front doorstep and, angling it upward, attach the ends to the outside corners of the house halfway between the eaves and the ground. Your foundation plants, when they are fully grown, should fall within these lines.

(more)

If the door is in the center of the house, the lines will be symetrical; if the door is to the side, one line will rise more steeply to the corner, indicating that taller plants on that side will help to achieve a balanced effect. If you would like your house to appear wider, place plants beyond the corners of the house that will grow to a height within a continuation of your lines from the doorstep.

There seems to be a preference these days for evergreens for foundation plants. This is not necessary, since the twig coloring and winter effects of many deciduous shrubs are equally interesting. But if evergreens are used, they should be such species as yew, juniper, and holly, which offer varieties that will grow only to the height you desire, cautions _____. Avoid full sized trees such as hemlocks and pines. Except for small flowering species such as dogwood or flowering crab, which may produce a pleasant effect at the corner of a house, trees have no proper place in foundation planting.

In general, with modern houses foundation plants should be low and spreading. Low plants are especially desirable at doorways and under windows, unless the house has a high foundation. And remember, says _____, that it is not necessary to hide every expanse of wall. Sometimes a better effect is obtained by placing plants at the doorway and corners and letting the lawn elsewhere run right up to the house.

Lawn trees, too, should frame and not hide the house. For this reason most homes look best with an expanse of lawn directly in front of the house. Trees on the front lawn should be planted beyond the corners of the house.

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Use Trees As Backdrop and Side Curtains; Let Your House Be Center of Attention

Lucky is the homeowner who can plant his own trees. For trees are probably the most important feature in providing an attractive setting for a house.

If possible, limit the use of large shade trees to the back or sides of your house, suggests _____. Thus positioned, they will provide an attractive beckdrop and side curtains, and your house will occupy the center of attention from the street.

Large trees are especially useful behind rambling, modern houses to soften harsh roof lines, says _____. But for trees to be planted in front of the building line, great care should be taken to choose size and species that will complement and not hide the house.

A general rule of good landscaping, for those who are in a position to choose their own trees, is to plant trees that will frame the house, giving it an air of spaciousness and stability. In choosing trees for this purpose, consider the angle and place from which the house is most likely to be seen. Usually this is from the view of the approaching visitor or passerby. Then plan your trees so the area in front of the house will be simple and uncluttered, and the surrounding trees will balance and frame the building.

Established nurserymen in your area can give valuable advice about the best species to plant where you live, their ultimate size and shape, and the best positions on your property to obtain the effect you want.

For homeowners who would like to improve the appearance of an existing landscape, overplanted and cluttered effects can sometimes be overcome by removing some trees and large shrubs, or by removing lower branches of trees that obscure a view.

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Homemade Compost Will Improve the Structure of Your Garden Soil

"Look at that beautiful, rich soil," is a typical comment from visitors admiring the garden landscape exhibits at spring flower shows. "No wonder those plants grow better than ours," is likely to be the next remark.

And these people are right. Garden and landscape plants do, of course, thrive better in good soil with plenty of organic matter to help it hold air, moisture and plant food, and give it a loose structure that permits roots to develop naturally.

With a little effort, you too can have such soil around your landscape plants and in your flower beds or vegetable plots, suggests _____. Many homeowners struggling with heavy clay or very sandy soil are constantly throwing away materials that could be used to improve it. Grass clippings, leaves, weeds, even vegetable parings and fruit peels from the kitchen, will decompose into suitable material for addition to the soil.

In city and suburban gardens, where large quantities of manure are difficult to obtain, a compost pile can supply much of the organic material needed for growing shrubs, flowers, and vegetables.

To make compost build up alternate layers of soil and organic waste materials. Over a 5 or 6 inch layer of clippings, parings, leaves or other wastes, spread a thin layer of manure to supply nitrogen, or throw a few handfuls of high-nitrogen fertilizer. (Nitrogen hastens decomposition) Then add 1 or 2 inches of soil. Continue to build up to 2 or 3 feet, beginning and ending with soil.

(Over)

The sides of the pile should be kept vertical (temporary wire fencing that can be moved away later, makes this easier), and the top should be level or slightly lower in the center to catch and hold moisture. In dry seasons, sprinkle the pile to keep it moist.

The compost you build this year will be ready for use next year, or possibly sooner depending upon the raw material you use, says _____. For a constant supply, compost gardeners find it convenient to keep two piles--one to build upon while the previous one is being used.

Turning and mixing a "ripening" pile will help the decomposition process and produce a compost mixture of more satisfactory fineness. To do this, slice down through the layers with a spade, turning and mixing as you form a new pile. In doing this, you can observe how near your compost is to being ready for use.

In using compost, mix with additional soil, or with sand and soil. For most plants, additional fertilizer will be needed.

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Soil Compaction by Heavy Farm Machinery Is Easier to Prevent Than to Cure

It is difficult to undo the damage once soil becomes packed to a concrete-like consistency. Therefore this increasingly common farm problem is worth avoiding, if possible.

Constant use of heavy machinery in farming operations tends to pack certain types of soil into unproductive hardpans or to form hard layers of soil just below plow depth, explains _____. (State or local authority) These reduce a soil's ability to absorb water at the surface and decrease permeation of moisture into the lower levels. In some cases it also restricts normal root development in planted crops.

Once soils become compacted, the impermeable layers must be broken up by subsoiling or deep tillage. Though some farm operators and soil scientists have found this effective in increasing yields, it is still a hit-or-miss affair, according to _____. Usually not enough is known about the physical condition of the subsoil to make certain that the process will be beneficial or profitable.

Prevention is still the best way to deal with soil compaction, says _____. Here are several tips he offers for avoiding this difficult problem.

1. Don't carry out machine operations while the soil is wet. Damage is frequently done shortly after rainy spells, when farmers become alarmed about the lateness of the season or vigorous growth of weeds in cultivated crops.

Over

2. Build soil's resistance to compaction by adding to its organic matter content through rotation with grass or pasture crops. Cover crops can be grown in off seasons and turned under as green manure before cultivated crops are planted.

3. Develop a minimum tillage system--tilling the soil as little as possible. This requires judgment on the part of the operator, but county agents can offer advice about minimum tillage methods adapted to your area. In some cases, the ground may be plowed once and the rest of the soil preparation left to natural processes such as freezing and thawing, or wetting and drying. Or seed may be planted in newly plowed ground and weed growth handled with pre-emergence and post-emergence sprays.

For those who already have compacted soil, research is slowly developing machinery and other means to meet the problem more effectively, under varying conditions. More attention to this problem is needed, says _____, if we are to avoid permanent and serious injury to some of our best soils.

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Hunting and Fishing Privileges for City Cousins Can Mean Extra Farm Income

More than 85 percent of U. S. land suitable for hunting is privately owned or controlled. That's an estimate by the Soil Conservation Service of the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

To hunting enthusiasts who live in towns and cities, this means that they must have the consent and cooperation of private landowners to pursue their favorite sport. To farmers and other landowners it can spell opportunity for increased income.

Farm practices that conserve soil and water also encourage wildlife and provide good hunting grounds for city neighbors, and good fishing too. Some farmers who encourage hunters and fishermen are reaping profits of $10 or more per acre for their wildlife practices, according to the Soil Conservation Service. They do this by charging reasonable fees for individual hunters or by offering leasing arrangements to hunting and fishing groups for use of their land.

Many forms of wildlife exist in every part of the United States. They can be encouraged in many ways since good land use and wildlife conservation go hand in hand, says SCS wildlife experts.

Stripcropped fields or planted field borders attract ground nesting birds such as quail, pheasants, and grouse by providing more "edge" where food and cover are close together. Properly designed and stocked farm ponds can produce 100 to 300 pounds of fish per acre each year.

(Over)

Or stock-water ponds fenced and planted to grasses, shrubs and trees provide water, food and homesites for upland game such as rabbits, muskrats and quail. In some areas, numerous manmade ponds have established whole new populations of ducks. Greatly increased tree planting during the past two seasons offers many new opportunities for development of better wildlife habitat.

Help in developing wildlife management practices is available to individual landowners through local soil conservation districts, ASC Committees (Conservation Reserve of the Soil Bank), or county agricultural agents. And for landowners with an eye to income from wildlife, arrangements can frequently be made with local hunting and fishing clubs to insure harvesting in accordance with rules that will protect both the game supply and the owner's property.

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Soil Bank Conservation Reserve Signups Will Close on April 15.

April 15 is the deadline for signing contracts this year under the Conservation Reserve of the Soil Bank. This is a reminder to _____ (area) farmers from _____ (State or local authority).

"Landowners interested in taking advantage of an opportunity to put some or all of their land into conservation plan that will return an annual cash payment per acre should hurry around to their local ASC (Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation) office and look into the possibilities," he suggests.

In addition to paying a cash rental fee for land placed in the Conservation Reserve, the Federal Government will share up to 80 percent of the cost of establishing approved conservation practices. These include planting permanent land cover of adapted grasses or legumes to protect and replenish the soil; planting forest trees; building water storage facilities such as ponds, dams or pits; and development of wildlife habitat. Special rates are offered to farmers willing to put all of their land into forest trees. And additional outside help from conservation groups or hunting clubs may be accepted for creating a wildlife habitat. Technical advice and help is also available for carrying out approved projects.

There's nothing to lose, and there may be much to gain in looking into the possibilities for your farm. Your local ASC committee is there to advise you on how you can take advantage of the Conservation Reserve and at the same time cut agricultural surpluses and build up the value of your land. See your ASC committee today, advises _____.

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Keep Some Vinegar On Hand When Dyeing Eggs for Easter

If you have trouble this Easter getting your hardcooked eggs to take a nice even coat of dye, vinegar may be the answer to your problem.

Directions that come with the packets of harmless food coloring designed for egg dyeing, and other food-coloring uses, usually call for a small amount of vinegar added to the dye bath. This is sufficient to cut a light grease film, such as finger marks, that might interfere with obtaining an even saturation of color on the egg shell.

But eggs that have been treated to maintain quality may be a little more difficult to dye, says _____. Some egg producers, seeking ways to preserve top quality during the inevitable delay from nest to home refrigerator, are coating their eggs with emulsion or oil to seal in the flavor and freshness. Such treatments, together with modern refrigeration and transportation methods, make it possible for more grade A and grade AA eggs to reach the consumer.

Here's a simple solution suggested by _____for difficulties that may be encountered in coloring these eggs for Easter.

If your first hardcooked egg does not take an even coat of color, try wiping each egg briefly and briskly with a cloth or paper towel dipped in vinegar, then drying before dropping it into the dye bath.

Since oil or emulsion coated eggs may be more likely to crack in cooking, it is good insurance to make a pinhole in the large end of each egg before boiling. For best results, cooking should be started in cold water and the egg should be simmered, rather than boiled, for about 10 minutes.

USDA 811 (3-58)

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Do Your Cows Support You, Or Do You Support Your Cows?

Many cows on _____ farms could be classified as dependents, even though their owners can't declare them as such for income tax purposes. They are dependents because they don't produce enough to pay for the feed they consume, the housing they require, and the hours of labor spent in taking care of them.

(State)

So says _____, who suggests that many dairy herds would produce better if the poorest cows were eliminated. A herd of 12 cows, for instance, might produce more milk if one poor producer were culled and her feed divided among the better producers. Then in addition to greater profits, the dairyman would have less work or more time to improve his general management.

The only reliable way to find low producers that pull down a herd's efficiency, suggests _____, is to keep some kind of records.

State-by-State dairy statistics released recently by the U. S. Department of Agriculture show a definite correlation between record-keeping and high production per cow. Records are kept on 31 percent of the cows in California, the State with the highest annual production per cow (8,880 pounds of milk in 1947). Texas, a State with almost as many milk cows as California but where records are kept on only 3 percent, had an average production per cow of 4,170 pounds last year, less than half the California average.

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USDA 812 (3-58)

Wisconsin, with the largest number of milk cows, had average production per cow of 7,640 pounds and records were kept on 14 percent. Production per cow was lowest in Louisiana (2,930 pounds) where only 1½ percent of the cows are on record.

Records were kept on _____percent* of _____cows last year.
(your State)
Average production for all cows in the State was _____.

Record-keeping itself does not increase production, of course, says _____, but it provides the information needed for efficient operation. On the basis of records, a dairyman can identify unprofitable cows that should be culled and do a better job of feeding and managing the better producers.

Several types of record-keeping plans are available to _____
(State)
dairymen through county agricultural agents. The simplest and the least expensive of these is the new Weigh-a-Day-a-Month plan, especially designed to meet the needs of the small operator who cannot afford to invest much time or expense in record-keeping.

Dairymen who keep records just naturally become better dairymen, according to _____, because their records reveal possibilities for improvement. Compared to a national average production per cow in the United States of 6,162 pounds of milk in 1957, cows enrolled under the Standard DHIA record-keeping plan produced an average of 9,713 pounds of milk.

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*Note to Editor: Figures for your State are given on the attached tables.

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Records Are Kept on One Out of Every Ten U. S. Milk Cows

Of approximately 20 million milk cows in the United States, about 2 million or 10 percent, are enrolled in one of the three official record-keeping plans of the National Cooperative Dairy Herd Improvement Program.

These figures are taken from a recent report by the U. S. Department of Agriculture, giving total enrollment through 1957 by States under the standard Dairy Herd Improvement Association plan, the Owner-Sampler plan, and the new Weigh-a-Day-a-Month plan. All three of these plans are available to dairymen through their county agricultural agents.

Among _____ herds,* the percent of cows on record is higher
(State)
(or lower) than the national average. Of a total _____thousand cows in the State _____ or _____percent are enrolled under one of the three DHIA plans. Included in the standard Dairy Improvement Association plan are _____herds consisting of _____cows and _____herds consisting of _____cows are enrolled in the Owner-Sampler plan. The new Weigh-a-Day-a-Month plan attracted signups among owners of _____cows in _____herds in this State during its first year of operation.

Nationally, enrollment under Weigh-a-Day-a-Month, a less expensive and simplified record-keeping system designed especially

for small herds, reached nearly 80,000 cows last year. Enrollments were also up under the older two plans, according to the USDA report.

The Dairy Herd Improvement Program is a national cooperative effort to improve the efficiency of dairy operations regardless of size of herd or level of production. Information obtained through any one of the three record-keeping plans is helpful to dairymen in making management decisions that lead to more profitable operation.

National average production per dairy cow last year was 6,162 pounds of milk. Average production per cow in the standard DHIA plan was 9,713 pounds.

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*Note to Editor: See attached table on DHIA enrollments for your State figures.

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For All States Except Alaska, Del., Me., Nev., N.H., R.I., Vt., W.Va.

Crop Insurance Now Available to More Farmers on More Crops

The Federal Crop Insurance Corporation will celebrate its 20th anniversary this year by providing one-third of a million farmer policyholders one-third of a billion dollar's worth of all-risk protection against crop disaster.

FCIC protection against loss from unavoidable causes of money invested in crop production is now available in over 800 U. S. counties, more than twice the number in which such insurance was offered in 1948, reports _____.

This year the Corporation is initiating a new contract method, another thing that should make crop insurance available to more farmers. The change brings together a variety of crop insurance contracts into a uniform policy with separate endorsements for the crops insured. This will facilitate adding insurance for additional crops in many counties to provide broader protection for policyholders.

Over its 20-year history FCIC has paid nearly a half billion dollars of indemnities to insured farmers who suffered unavoidable crop losses, according to _____. These insurance checks have enabled many farmers to survive crop disasters which otherwise would have put them out of business.

In the words of Secretary of Agriculture Ezra Taft Benson: "Every year though national production is high crop catastrophes take a heavy toll in some farming areas. Where crop disaster strikes, farmers and the business community feel the need for emergency assistance. Crop insurance was designed and developed to provide the opportunity to meet this need on a business basis...."

Farmers in _____ can obtain information about Federal
(State)
crop insurance by writing to _____
(See attached list for Director and address for your State)
_____.

USDA 903 (4-58)

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Repair Winter Damage to Trees Promptly to Avoid Permanent Loss

Heavy winter and spring snows have left behind an unusually large crop of broken and splintered branches this year. Prompt treatment of these wounds will prevent permanent disfigurement or untimely death for many trees, says _____.

While the wounds are fresh, tree owners can repair much of the damage themselves with the aid of a few simple tools. But once decay or infection sets in, the help of a professional tree surgeon is usually required, or the tree may be needlessly lost.

Broken or split branches should be removed flush with the trunk or the nearest large limb. For quick healing it is important to make a clean cut and leave no stub that will prevent callus from growing over the wound. If many branches are to be removed, it is worthwhile to obtain a pruning saw because it will work much more efficiently than an ordinary crosscut saw or ripsaw. Small branches can be removed with pruning shears, and a sharp pruning knife is needed to shape wounds for rapid healing.

The shape of a bark wound has a marked effect upon how fast it will heal, explains _____. In general, wounds should be streamlined to a vertical almond shape with no jagged edges. This permits rapid drainage of outside moisture and removes any hard-to-heal spots that would be cut off from the regular flow of sap within the tree.

To avoid tearing the bark in removing a heavy limb, _____ suggests making two preliminary cuts before removing the stub. The first cut should be made from the bottom of the limb, about 10 inches out from where the final cut will be made, sawing upward through the branch about one-third of the way through. The second cut should be started from above, an additional 6 inches beyond the first cut, and sawing continued until the branch splits off. Then the stub can be sawed off neatly and cleanly. Smaller branches can be supported with one hand while sawing with the other, thus eliminating the need for preliminary cuts.

All pruning cuts that expose the wood, but especially those too large to heal over in one year, should be painted over with wound dressing to keep out insects and disease. Several types of dressing for this purpose are available at garden supply stores.

Healing will be hastened in most cases by an application of fertilizer.

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New Lima Bean Variety Will Grow Well in Nematode-Infested Soil

Gardeners and vegetable producers who have been unable to grow good crops of lima beans because their soil is infested with nematodes will be interested in a new nematode-resistant variety available this year from commercial seed companies.

Nemagreen, a baby green-seeded variety of lima, is the result of 15 years of breeding work by the U. S. Department of Agriculture and the Virginia, Oklahoma, and California experiment stations. It was produced by crossing a lima bean grown by the Hopi Indians in their nematode-infested Arizona soil with some of our best and most highly productive market types.

Most lima bean varieties are highly subject to attacks of the root-knot nematode that is widely distributed throughout the soils of southern States. The sickly, yellow plants attacked by the nematode produce few beans and are sometimes killed outright. As suggested by its name, the tiny worm-like animal eats into the roots causing them to swell and form knots, or galls. Root ends are killed and the root system develops a short, bushy appearance as small rootlets sprout above the galls. When a gall is broken open, the white nematode and its brown egg masses are usually visible to the eye.

Nemagreen, which is a cross between Early Thorogreen and a white-seeded Oklahoma variety, successfully resists the nematode's attack. On infested soil, it is far more productive than any similar green-seeded variety. On non-infested soil, however, growing trails have shown Nemagreen to be a little less productive than Early Thorogreen and Clark's Bush varieties.

USDA 954 (4-58)

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Big Job Ahead in Forest Management If U. S. Is To Meet Future Timber Needs

Even if all forest land in the United States capable of growing commercial crops of trees is put fully to work, this country may have difficulty in meeting its future timber needs.

Increases in population point to further urbanization of land, further development of our national highway system, more needs for reservoir sites, and additional use of forest land for recreational and water yield purposes. The question of whether such land pressures as these might prevent us from meeting our future timber needs is raised in a recently published study by the U. S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service entitled "Timber Resources for America's Future."

The answer lies pretty largely in the hands of farmers and other owners of small forest tracts. Three-quarters of our commercial forest land--land capable of growing trees as a crop--is privately owned. This land is distributed among 4.5 million owners, of which 3.4 million are farmers. Virtually all farm tracts are less than 500 acres, with a large percentage consisting of less than 100 acres.

The current productivity of much forest land in the United States is low, according to the report, in relation to physical capacity of the soil and climate. For one thing, production depends upon keeping the land growing as many trees as it can. An extensive survey by the Forest Service in 1952 indicated that one-fourth of our commercial forest area is poorly stocked. Over 40 million acres have less than 10 percent of the trees they are capable of maintaining; another 73 million acres are only 10 to 40 percent fully stocked.

On the brighter side of the picture, trends in tree planting have improved since the preparation of the timber resources report. The Forest Service reports that over a billion trees were planted on about a million acres of forest land in 1957, a record never exceeded in U. S. history. Even more are expected to be planted this year with both State and Federal agencies cooperating to encourage tree planting under the Conservation Reserve of the Soil Bank and other programs designed to lower the cost of reforesting privately-owned lands.

USDA 1166 (4-58)

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Diseases Cause Greatest Losses in Timber and Other Forest Products

Plants, as well as people, suffer from disease. And in forests, as well as factories, illness is a major enemy of productivity.

According to an exhaustive study recently published by the Forest Service of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, entitled "Timber Resources for America's Future," diseases far outrank all other destructive agents in reducing forest productivity. It is estimated that about 45 percent, or almost half, of the total losses in growth and mortality of sawtimber (mature trees) and growing stock is caused by tree diseases.

Most diseases that affect American forest trees are native. Occasionally, and for a variety of causes, these become epidemic, greatly increasing their normal destructive effects. Some of the most destructive diseases, such as white pine blister rust and chestnut blight, have been introduced from other continents.

Though insects are responsible for the greatest percentage of actual mortality of trees, when growth losses and mortality are added together, insects are only about half as damaging as disease and about on a par with fire as a destroying agent. Tremendous strides in forest fire prevention and control have reduced the damaging effects of this threat to forest production, but so great is its potential menace that any relaxation of effort could make fire once again the number one destroyer. Weather and animals are other significant robbers of the forests' wealth.

Some reduction in losses from all causes can be expected in the future, the Forest Service predicts, because timber owners are gradually becoming aware of the basic principle that many losses can be reduced by improved forest management. Measures that improve the thrift and vigor of the trees help to control insects and diseases, and better management practices reduce losses due to fire, animals and weather.

Help in managing private forestland for greater profit is available to landowners through their county agricultural agents or district foresters.

USDA 1167 (4-58)

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Ill., Ind., Iowa, Kans., Ky., Md., Mich., Minn., Mo., Nebr., N. J., N. Y., N. Dak., Ohio, Pa., R. I., S. Dak., Va., W. Va., and Wisc.

Soybeans Grow and Mature More Rapidly When Planted Late

Because they are more tolerant of cold than many other crops, soybeans can be planted successfully over a wide season. But recent date-of-planting studies indicate it is better to plant full-season varieties (those that mature shortly before frost) on the late side because they will grow more rapidly, compete better with weeds and mature as soon as those planted earlier.

This observation arises from cooperative studies by the U. S. Department of Agriculture, the Illinois Agricultural Experiment Station, and other North Central States, reported by _____. (State or local authority) Early-maturing varieties are an exception to the late-planting rule, he explains.

Soybeans are light-conscious plants--their time of blooming and maturing is governed by the length of day. Therefore only recommended varieties should be planted in any particular location because these have been tested and found satisfactory for production in that latitude. In another latitude, where day length and temperatures differ, the same varieties may be largely or wholly unproductive.

In general, according to _____, an early variety should be planted early to give it enough time to develop and mature normally. But since a late variety will simply mark time (remain in a vegetative state) until the day-length is right for blooming and maturing, there

is no advantage in planting it early. If planting is delayed until the soil is warmer, another crop of weeds may germinate and can be killed before the soybeans are planted. And the soybean plants will grow more rapidly, thus giving better weed control during the growing period.

The USDA-Illinois studies indicate that no single planting date is best for all varieties in the same location. And the same variety should be planted at different dates in different latitudes to obtain the best harvest of high quality seeds.

For information about the highest yielding varieties and the best planting dates for your locality, consult your county agricultural agent or your State Agricultural Experiment Station, suggests _____.

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Hog Producers' Cautions Expansion Has Helped to Maintain Favorable Pork Prices

To be forewarned is to be forearmed. Hog producers were warned last fall that a rapid expansion in hog production would mean a disastrous fall in prices this year. Because they heeded that warning and expanded production only moderately in spite of extremely favorable feed prices, pork prices have remained good and the outlook for the rest of this year remains bright, reports _____.
(State or local authority)

Current hog prices are almost twice the 1955 low of about $11 per hundred pounds and not too greatly short of their all-time record high of the 1953-54 season. And this is the more surprising in view of a drop in consumer income and a slow decline in per-capita demand for pork.

Despite reports indicating an 8 to 10 percent increase in the fall pig crop, continued good prices for pork are expected for the next 12 months or so. Whether they continue good after that depends, in large part, upon continued restraint among hog producers. If, on the basis of present optimism, caution is thrown to the winds, and a rapid expansion occurs next year, then sharp price declines will follow, predict _____ and USDA agricultural economists.
(State)

Last fall, Secretary of Agriculture Ezra Taft Benson asked hog producers to consider their production intentions for 1958 with especial care in view of the hog-feed price situation. A large supply of feed grains from bumper crops was selling at low prices. In September, 16.6

bushels of corn could be bought for the price of 100 pounds of hogs. (The average for a number of years previously had been about 12 bushels of corn to 100 pounds of hogs.) This situation usually leads to a flood of pork on the market the following year, with a consequent rapid fall in prices as consumer demands are exceeded by supplies.

Hog production is expected to continue its present upward trend. But so far, the expansion is conservative and prices have continued good, due in part to population increases, and in part to reduced beef supplies as cattlemen move to rebuild their herds after a 2-years' decline in cattle numbers.

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More Than Six Million Dairy Cows Were Bred Artificially in 1957

The number of dairy cows bred artificially from sires that have demonstrated superior breeding qualities keeps rising each year. Now more than a fourth of U. S. dairy cows are so bred.

A round-up by the U. S. Department of Agriculture of reports submitted by State Extension dairymen shows that over 6 million U. S. dairy cows were bred artificially in 1957.

In _____ (State),* _____ cows were bred artificially last year, or _____ percent of the State total.

In numbers, Wisconsin was the leading State with over a million artificially bred cows. Minnesota followed with over half a million, and then New York and Pennsylvania with a little less than half a million each.

Percentagewise, States with far fewer dairy cows made an even better showing. Maine ranked first, then Utah and Massachusetts. Nearly 50 percent of the cows bred in these States during 1957 were bred artificially.

Sires used for artificial breeding are proved on the basis of their ability to pass along to their daughters a capacity for high milk production. The proved sires used in artificial studs in 1956 were mated to dams averaging 10,626 pounds of milk. Their daughters averaged 11,304 pounds of milk.

Information about artificial breeding service available in any community can be obtained from the county agricultural agent or from _____ (State Extension Dairyman).

*See columns 4 and 6 of attached report on Status of Artificial Breeding Program for your State figures.

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The Role of the Cook Has Changed

Yesterday's good cook needed to know how to clean and pluck a chicken, how to render lard and how to mix a tender, fluffy pastry. And she carefully hoarded scores of recipes of favorite dishes handed down from her mother and grandmother, together with the knowledge of how to turn them into culinary triumphs.

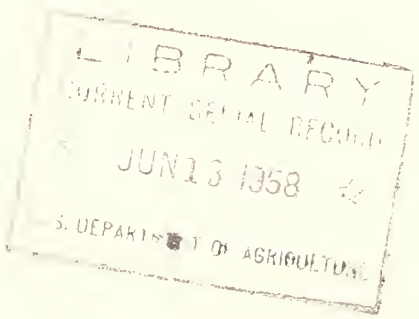
Today's homemaker needs far less skill to turn the partially or wholly prepared foods from modern markets into luscious and nutritious family fare. But there's still room for ability and imagination in the kitchen. Confronted with an unprecedented variety of food products to choose from, the cook as guardian of the family health needs to know how to select the things that form the basis of an adequate diet. She must know how to combine various types of food into appetizing and appealing meals that provide calories, vitamins and minerals enough to keep her family in tip-top shape.

To help her with this important task, nutrition experts of the U. S. Department of Agriculture have developed a Daily Food Guide based on four groups of foods that should be included in the diet every day to maintain good health and normal vigor. The guide also indicates how many servings of each food group are needed to supply most of the essential nutrients and about half the calories needed by an average adult. Additional nutrients and calories can be added to the foundation diet through extra servings and through fats and sugar ordinarily used with other foods.

The four main food groups include: 1. milk and cheese (dairy products); 2. meat, fish and eggs (or dry beans, dry peas and nuts, as substitutes); 3. vegetables and fruits; and 4. breads and cereals.

Number of servings recommended is the same for adults and children for all except the milk group. Adults need 2 or more cups of milk or its equivalent, children need 3 or more cups, and teen-agers need at least 4 cups. Everyone should have 2 or more servings of the meat group. And 4 or more servings daily are recommended for each of the last two groups.

A single free copy of the Daily Food Guide, Leaflet No. 424, can be obtained by writing to _____ (or to The Office
(State source)
of Information U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington 25, D. C.)



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Stalk Those Wasps At Night

Under cover of darkness is the best time to go after those vigorous spring builders with the vicious stings who may have selected your premises for a home site. This is the advice of _____ (State or local authority).

Of more than 2,500 species of wasp in North America, only a few--hornets, yellow jackets, polistes wasps, and mud daubers--are troublesome to man, according to _____. Even these could be classed as beneficial insects were it not for their habits of building nests too close to the house or in the garden shrubbery and dealing a stinging rebuke to anyone who disturbs them. Wasps in general kill and eat such pests as house flies, blow flies, corn earworms, armyworms, and many others.

Night is the best time to destroy a wasp nest because the insects are less active then and most of them are in their nest, says _____. Danger of being stung is less at night, but still it is wise to work quickly.

Chlordane and DDT are recommended as the best insecticides for spraying or dusting wasp nests. These are available from any insecticide dealer and can be applied with a household or garden-type sprayer or a hand duster. For mixing concentrates or wettable powders into a spray, follow the directions of the manufacturer.

Two or three strong puffs or sprays into the opening of a hornets' or yellow jackets' nest should kill the whole colony within 24 hours. The insects can be sprayed more directly in an open-celled, umbrella-shaped polistes' nest.

Some people prefer to dislodge a hornets' or yellow jackets' nest into a paper sack and then destroy it by burning or burying. This can be done safely, at night, if you first plug the opening of the globular papier-mache nest with absorbent cotton soaked with carbon tetrachloride to stun the insects. The job can be completed by placing the nest in an airtight can with a few tablespoons of carbon tetrachloride. But be sure to work with carbon tetrachloride in the open air, warns _____, because its fumes are poisonous to human beings as well as wasps.

Kill individual wasps that find their way into the house with a fly swatter or a direct spray from an aerosol bomb or household sprayer.

If the wasp gets you first, apply an ice pack to the sting and then coat with a paste made of water and baking soda. A person who is stung many times or who reacts severely should see a doctor following the above first aid treatment.

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In Killing Ants, Your Job Is Easier If You Can Find the Nest

Ants are a large, varied, and highly adaptable family. But one thing they have in common--they all build nests or colonies where a great number of the same species live together and raise their young.

In getting rid of these pests of home and garden, the job is much easier, suggests _____ _____, if you can locate
(State or local authority)
the nest. Unless you storm the stronghold and wipe out the entire colony, the adaptable ants may simply change their travel routes, and possibly their sources of supply, and leave you to carry on a more-or-less losing campaign of guerrilla warfare.

Finding an ant nest in the house is not always easy because it may be behind a wall or under the foundation or between floor and subfloor. In such case, the next best thing is to find the crack or outlet through which the ants pour and treat this area thoroughly with a long-lasting insecticide.

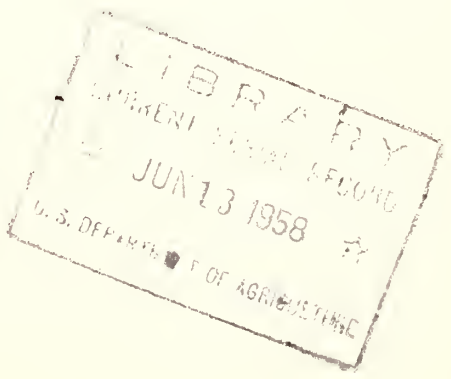
Chlordane is recommended as an effective insecticide for ants, though there are a number of others that can be used, such as dieldrin or lindane. They may be applied as sprays, dusts, or granules. In using these insecticides, and in preparing sprays from wettable powders or emulsifiable concentrates, be sure to follow the directions of the manufacturer.

USDA 1322 (5-58)

Ready mixed, oil-base sprays are usually most desirable for use indoors because they dry to an almost invisible coating and are less likely to cause spotting or staining. They are inflammable, however, and should not be used near an open flame, and they will injure asphalt tile and linoleum. A dust applied with a hand duster is sometimes preferable, especially in hard-to-reach places, but the person applying it should be careful not to inhale the insecticide.

Water-base sprays are generally better for use outdoors because oil sprays will injure plants. For ground nests, chlordane can be applied as a drench, or a powder can be sprinkled on top and washed down into the nest with a hose.

To prevent ants from entering the house from outdoors, use an oil-base spray on the outside walls, from the ground up to the windows. Pay particular attention to lower parts of window frames and around doors. On basementless houses or open porches, spray the underside of the structure, treating all supports, posts, pillars and pipes that ants might use as runways into the house.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Some Fungi Found To Aid Tree Growth

Except for the edible mushroom and its aristocratic cousin, the truffle, fungi are generally regarded as pests that cause a variety of plant and some animal diseases. The useful yeasts also are fungi, but we seldom think of them as such; just as few of us can identify the mildew that stains our clothing and furniture as a fungus.

Science has recently discovered more beneficial members among this large group of organisms which are really small plants. Penicillin and several other antibiotics, for instance, are extracted from fungi. And the mysterious new plant growth stimulator, gibberellic acid, is produced by a fungus.

Among our newest friends found among the fungi are a species called mycorrhizae. Plant scientists at the U. S. Department of Agriculture have discovered that these fungi help tree growth. Some have threadlike filaments that form covers around the tree roots and radiate out into a large volume of soil, helping the roots to draw increased amounts of nutrients from the surrounding area. Others penetrate the root cells of the tree and are digested as additional food. The result is better tree growth in soils where mycorrhizae fungi occur.

The USDA scientists are conducting experiments to check more accurately the effects of these fungi upon plant growth. And they are seeking ways to introduce them into soils where they do not occur naturally.

We treat many seeds and seedlings with a fungicide to prevent "damping-off," one of many diseases caused by fungi. But we may someday give plants a "shot" of another kind of fungi to help them grow.

USDA 1405 (5-58)

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Milk Is For Everyone

For healthy bones and teeth, for clear skin and steady nerves, nutritionists emphasize that it is important for everyone to get enough milk. Milk is one of the best sources of calcium and of the B-vitamin riboflavin. It is almost impossible to get enough of these important nutrients with less than recommended quantities of milk, according to _____.

Adults should get at least a pint of milk a day. Children need 1-1/2 pints to a quart, and teen-agers should have a quart or more every day. A recent survey by the U. S. Department of Agriculture showed that many people are not getting these recommended quantities.

Of course it is not necessary to consume all this as plain milk, says _____. Much of it can be eaten or drunk in other forms. Cheese, cottage cheese, and ice cream are popular ways of "eating" milk. And many favorite family dishes from soups to desserts contain milk.

One inexpensive and easy way to increase milk in the family diet is to add nonfat dry milk to fluid milk used in making many cooked foods. Four tablespoons of dry milk added to one cup of fluid milk makes it twice as rich in milk value.

For some good recipes to add to your collection of milk-rich foods, write to the Office of Information, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington 25, D. C. (or a State source), for a free copy of Home and Garden Bulletin No. 57, "Getting Enough Milk." This booklet also contains a table of milk equivalents in cheese and other foods to help you figure how much milk you and your family are getting.

Note to editors: This is additional copy to help you with your June Dairy Month promotion.

USDA 1406 (5-58)

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Another Rich Grain Harvest Will Increase Need for On-Farm Storage

Remember Aesop's fable about the wise and industrious ant who laid in stores for the winter while the grasshopper whiled away the time in singing? This is a year when grain producers could borrow a little of the ant's foresight.

The best insurance against having to sell grains on a harvest-glutted market this summer and fall will be to have plenty of storage capacity on your own farm.

The outlook at present is for a repeat of last year's near-record feed grain crop, reports _____. With huge carryover stocks from last year still in the bins (The U. S. Department of Agriculture estimates a record carryover into 1958-59 of 62 million tons of feed grains), commercial storage may be hard to find at harvest time. Also, the winter wheat crop may be the third largest of record--more than a billion bushels.

Having sufficient storage on the farm, says _____, will assure a producer of greater latitude in disposing of his crop. It will mean he can take advantage of a price support loan, save his grain for sale later at a better price, or keep it in good condition for feeding to his own livestock. In a year when grain is plentiful, this can mean the difference between profit and loss.

Loans for up to 80 percent of the cost of building on-farm storage are available to farmers through their local ASC (Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation) committees. These loans are for 5 years at 4 percent interest, with the first payment due at the end of the first year. Any farm operator, share tenant or share landlord is eligible for these loans which apply to storage for wheat, corn, oats, rye, barley, soybeans, grain sorghums, dry beans, rice, peanuts, cottonseed, and flaxseed.

ASC Committees also can arrange loans for installation of grain conditioning equipment in farm storage buildings. These are for 3 years at 4 percent and are repayable in 3 yearly installments beginning at the end of the first year. They may cover up to 75 percent of the cost of equipment.

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High Quality Cotton Will Bring Premium Prices Again This Year

Extra rewards for good quality await the cotton producer who succeeds in producing a high-quality crop this year. So says _____, who adds that discounts for low quality will
(State or local authority)
continue to be stiff.

An abundance of low-grade cotton left over from last year's crop will continue to depress the market for lower grades, according to _____. But the present outlook for the 1958 crop indicates a continued shortage of high grade fiber.

A late spring, shortages of good seed, and too much moisture have contributed to a poor start for cotton this year in many areas. But there is still plenty of opportunity to aim for high quality through careful management and harvest practices. These include: weed, disease, and insect control; fertilization at rates based on Extension Service recommendations; careful harvesting and ginning; keeping low and high grade fiber separate; and selling on grade.

Almost a third of last year's cotton crop classified as spotted. The result was a lower average grade for the 1957 crop than for any year on record.

Much of this spotting could have been avoided through better management practices, says _____. Widespread failure to adhere to such practices weakens cotton's position vis-a-vis synthetic and other fibers in marketing for many uses. And this, in turn, contributes to cotton surpluses and depressed prices.

County agricultural agents can help producers to improve their crops by providing them with the latest information on how to grow cotton for quality, and how best to preserve that quality in harvesting and ginning.

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Farm Fillers

About 3½ million Americans 14 years of age or older do some farm work for wages, according to estimates by the U. S. Department of Agriculture based on 1956 figures (the latest available). About 2 million of these persons worked 25 days or more during 1956, and almost 300,000 worked 300 days or more.

The number of hired farm workers increased by approximately half a million over 1954, the latest previous survey. Most of the increase was in workers with less than 25 days of farm wage work, and more than half were women.

It pays to produce high quality peaches and sell them at their best. A marketing survey by the U. S. Department of Agriculture in North and South Carolina showed that consumers are ready and willing to pay premium prices for premium peaches.

Packages of 8 to 10 tree-ripened or firm ripe peaches in a cell carton were sold to 2,769 consumers who answered a questionnaire giving their reactions to the fruit. Of these, 92 percent liked the peaches and 88 percent said their condition was good. The materials and labor costs to prepackage these peaches were twice as high as bulk packing. But the premium prices received for the more mature peaches more than covered additional costs.

In Europe, as in the United States, small privately-owned woodlots are the least productive forest areas. National governments show considerable interest in the management of these woodlands, and many types of financial and technical aid are offered to the owners. In some countries--Norway, Sweden, Finland, Portugal and Switzerland--restocking of cutover areas is required by law.

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U. S. Inspection Insures Wholesome Fruits and Vegetables

Purchasers of frozen, canned and dried fruits and vegetables may have wondered about the meaning of a shield-shaped mark on some of these processed items stating that the product "was packed under continuous inspection of the U. S. Department of Agriculture." They may also wonder why this stamp is found on some and not on other processed foods.

The stamp is an assurance that the product marked is clean, wholesome, and of good quality. More specifically, it means that a Federal inspector stationed in the plant where it was packed has checked the premises and equipment for sanitation, has kept constant watch on the quality of raw materials used, and has checked samples of the finished product for quality. In addition to this, the plant, to qualify for inspection services, has met rigid requirements as to lighting, ventilation, water supplies, plant construction, equipment and operating procedures.

In some cases the stamp will also carry a U. S. grade number, reflecting the judgment of the inspector regarding the quality of the product.

Federal inspection of fruits and vegetables is voluntary. The processor has paid a fee for the services of the inspector, and he has met the requirements set by the Department of Agriculture as a standard of completely sanitary operation.

In the 20 years since Federal inspection of fruits and vegetables began in a canning factory in Traverse City, Michigan, the service has grown to cover plants in all parts of the country. These processors are offering their customers an objective mark of assurance concerning the quality and wholesomeness of their product.

USDA 1604 (6-58)

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For Pa., Md., Va., W.Va., N.C., Tenn., Ky., Ark.

Help Available to Owners of Oaks Infected with Wilt

A Federal-State arrangement to check further spread of oak wilt into valuable Eastern timber stands provides for help to owners of trees that may be infected by this potentially costly tree disease.

Of course, every oak tree that shows signs of disease or loss of vigor is not infected with oak wilt, says _____. Some may
(State or local authority)
be suffering from another disease, from drought, or from lack of sufficient nutrients. But an oak tree that drops a copious number of leaves any time before its normal season of leaf fall can be suspected of having contracted the fatal fungus infection. The falling leaves may look almost normal, or they may be somewhat bronzed or appear water-soaked.

The disease is feared for the potential damage that it might do if it were to spread quickly throughout Eastern forest areas, rather than for losses it has already caused.

Any property owner who suspects an oak wilt infection among his trees should get in touch with his county agricultural agent, or the _____ State Forester located at _____. If the tree exhibits oak wilt symptoms--especially the abnormal leaf fall described above--the State forester will arrange for examination and tests to establish whether the disease is actually present. If it is, the tree will be treated to prevent further spread to healthy trees in the vicinity. In some cases this may include removal of the dead or dying tree.

Oak wilt is spread by spores formed by the disease-causing fungus under the bark of an infected tree. These spores may be carried by insects and squirrels, and possibly by other animals and birds. They enter and infect another tree through wounds in the bark. The disease may also spread to nearby trees through natural root grafts. All species of oak may contract oak wilt, but red oaks are most susceptible.

Oak wilt has been present for a number of years and is well established in several Middle Western States, notably Wisconsin and Iowa. Why it has not spread more quickly throughout the valuable oak stands of the East is not fully understood. But it is to prevent such a development that help is offered to individual tree owners in wiping out isolated infections.

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U. S. Department of Agriculture

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Gardener's Backache Can Be Prevented by Correct Posture

It's hard to resist the temptation to stoop down, grab that big weed that has sprouted up in the flower bed or vegetable patch, and give it a tug. If the stubborn roots hold, the challenge increases, and we are likely to tug away until something gives.

That's the origin of many a gardener's backache. Too late we realize that in ridding our gardens of a few unwanted boarders, we have strained the muscles of our backs.

_____ reminds that pulling a weed is much like lifting a weight. In general it is better to use a hoe or some other grubbing tool, but if you must pull, use the same posture that is recommended for lifting. Bend the knees and crouch down, feet apart, with back straight and shoulders over hips. Grasp the unwanted plant near its base with both hands and pull with short, steady jerks, making use of the strong leg muscles. If the plant does not come out easily this way, get a tool to help you.

When it comes to weeds, says _____, you may be sorry if you stoop to conquer.

USDA 1681 (6-58)

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Ala., Ariz., Ark., Calif., Ga., La., Miss., Mo., N.Mex., N.C., Okla., S.C., Tenn., Tex.

Pest Control Is Essential for High Quality Cotton

How does one cotton producer succeed in getting a high-quality crop, while his neighbor, using similar materials and land, harvests a poor quality fiber worth considerably less money?

The difference, says _____, is not just a matter
(State or local authority)
of luck. High-quality cotton is the result of a year-round program of careful management based on knowledge and experience developed in the area where the cotton is grown. The extra effort involved in getting acquainted with these practices and carrying them out pays off in a higher-quality product.

At this time of year, according to _____, the producer of high quality cotton is concerned with controlling pests that may reduce the quantity or quality of his crop. He knows and recognizes the insects that destroy cotton, and he knows also that other insect predators feed upon the destroyers. He checks his crop weekly for signs of a build-up of destructive insects and to see if there are sufficient beneficial insects to keep them under control. If his crop is threatened, he moves in promptly with the best control measures available. He is also conscious of potential threats from disease and weeds and knows how to protect his crop from them also.

How does he recognize a threat in time, and how does he know what to do about it? He has kept in touch with his county agricultural agent and the cotton specialists at _____ for the latest information about
(State College)
how to improve his crop and how to protect it from pests.*

With a shortage of top grade cotton and an abundance of lower grades in prospect, it is the top-quality producer who can be sure of a profit at harvest time this year, reminds _____.

*Note to editors: You may wish to mention bulletins available in your State.

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New Weedkillers Offer New Possibilities in Chemical Weed Control

Have you a special weed problem? Ask your garden supply dealer whether he has a chemical that can help you. Or call your county agricultural agent. He has the latest information about chemical weed control, and his advice is as near as your telephone, suggests _____.

Most of us are familiar now with the more commonly-used chemical weed killers such as 2,4-D and 2,4,5-T says _____. But research keeps turning up new chemical compounds with new and more selective uses in controlling unwanted plants. Many of these are less volatile than the phenoxy compounds to which 2,4-D and its relatives belong, and can be used safely under situations where older herbicides would be hazardous to nearby plants and crops.

Dalapon, for instance, one of the newer chemicals, is very effective for controlling perennial weed grasses such as quackgrass, Bermudagrass, and Johnsongrass. Sesone, related to 2,4-D but ineffective as a foliage spray, can be applied to newly cultivated soil to suppress weed growth before it starts. Amitrol is excellent for killing poison ivy in shady places and where spray drift from 2,4-D or 2,4,5-T would endanger other plants.

New herbicides like monuron and simazin can be used to treat tennis courts, driveways, and other areas where it is desirable to eliminate all vegetation. Silvex has proved especially useful for killing broad-leaved lawn weeds such as dandelion, plantain, wild garlic, and especially chickweed (which is difficult to control with other lawn herbicides).

Sprayers used for weedkillers should be washed out immediately afterwards because many of the chemicals are corrosive to metal. It is always wise to reserve a separate sprayer for killing weeds because it is difficult to remove all of the chemical in ordinary washing. Even a trace remaining may kill sensitive plants if the sprayer is used later for insecticides or other materials.

Also, because of their injurious nature, it is best to store herbicides apart from seed, feed, fungicides, insecticides, and other farm and garden supplies.

USDA 1692 (6-58)

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USDA Will Compare Productivity of Crossbred and Purebred Dairy Cattle

An old controversy as to whether hybrid dairy cattle might be better producers than purebred cattle is about to be subjected to scientific scrutiny at the U. S. Department of Agriculture's Beltsville, Md., research center.

A long-range investigation recently undertaken by USDA scientists will compare purebred Brown Swiss, Ayrshire, and Holstein cows with crosses of the same breeds. Test matings are planned so that both two-way and three-way crosses can be compared.

The crossbred and purebred cattle descended from the same basic stock will be compared on the basis of their milk production (including butterfat content and solids-not-fat production), breeding qualities, birth weight, growth of calves, and their efficiency in converting feed into milk.

These studies should demonstrate whether the hybrid vigor that has been so effective in increasing productivity and quality in many plants and some animals can be put to practical use in improving dairy herds. Using sires from artificial breeding establishments, crossbreeding would be relatively easy to practice in the dairy industry if it should prove desirable.

USDA 1766 (6-58)

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Ala., Ark., Fla., Ga., Miss., N. Mex., N. C., Okla., S. C., Tenn., Tex., Va.

Peanut Shells Carry Meadow Nematode, Damager of Southern Crops and Gardens

Contrary to popular belief, peanut crops are often heavily damaged by meadow nematodes. And peanut shells are potential carriers of these pests to other plants as well as to future peanut crops.

Meadow nematodes have been underestimated, and sometimes completely overlooked as a threat to peanuts, says _____, because they concentrate their feeding on the fruiting pegs and shells of the peanut plant, rather than on the roots, where cotton, corn and tobacco are damaged most.

Studies by the Georgia Agricultural Experiment Station and the U. S. Department of Agriculture have shown that meadow nematodes can be carried into non-infected soil on the shells of infected peanuts. Shelled seeds, on the other hand, do not infect the soil since the nematode does not enter the kernel.

In a field at Tifton, Ga., where many peanuts had been left by the harvester 2 years before, there were large patches of chlorotic (abnormally light-colored) plants. Extensive nematode damage, marked by dark to purplish brown areas, was found on the pods in those patches. Numerous nematodes--adults, larvae, and eggs--were found on the injured pods; only about one-sixth as many were found on the roots. (In another study eight times as many nematodes were found on pods as on roots of the same plants.)

Based on these Georgia-USDA studies, the scientists suggest several measures that will help to check the spread of nematodes, not only in peanuts but in other susceptible garden and field crops. First, if peanuts are harvested early and a clean job of harvesting done, most infected shells will be removed and peanuts can be rotated with other susceptible crops. Second, shelled seeds and not whole pods should be planted to minimize the spread of the nematode. And, third, peanut shells should not be used for garden mulch or fertilizer extenders unless they have been treated to kill nematodes.

Row-fumigation of field peanuts was found to be effective in reducing nematode counts and increasing yields. But before this practice can be recommended, more farm trials will be needed to learn whether it pays. Another possibility yet to be explored is sidedressing with nematocides.

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Conn., Del., Md., Mass., Mich., N. J., N. Y., N. C., Pa., R. I., Va., W. Va.

Wild Blueberries May Carry Disease to Cultivated Varieties

Growers of cultivated blueberries whose yields have been cut by stunt virus may have been overlooking a source of infection in their own "backyards."

Though the disease has not previously been recognized in highbush and other wild blueberry species, New Jersey and U. S. Department of Agriculture scientists found them to be veritable reservoirs of the stunt virus.

Growers generally isolate their new plantings of blueberries from old fields and consider that adequate protection. They have assumed that the virus reached their newer plantings somehow from far-off places.

Now the scientists suggest that they destroy nearby native blueberries and control leafhoppers (carriers of the virus) as a better means of curbing this disease.

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A Knife Is Still the Best Insecticide for Squash Vine Borers

Once a squash vine borer eats its way into the stem of a squash plant, the only way to go after it and save the wilting runner is with a sharp knife (or razor blade). Chemical insecticides will not reach the varment.

The borer, which may be found eating its way into squash vines anywhere east of the Rocky Mountains, according to _____, is a white, worm-like larva, about an inch long. It bores its way into the stem near the base of a runner and continues to feed from the inside.

The only possible means of saving a runner which has been attacked, says _____, is to locate the point of injury, then split one side of the stem with a sharp blade until you puncture the worm. Pile a mound of moist soil around the cut stem to prevent drying and to encourage root growth above the injury. If treatment is given promptly, the runner may recover and continue to produce.

A rotenone dust or spray applied every week to runner bases will help to prevent squash borer injury but will not give 100 percent control.

USDA 1859 (7-58)

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Calif., Colo., Idaho, Mich., Mont., N. Y., Ohio, Oreg., Pa., Utah, Wash., Wisc.

Cherry Harvest Speeded Up With Fish Nets

Nets can be used to catch cherries as well as fish.

By shaking ripe cherries from a tree into a minnow net spread over a frame below, one worker can harvest 100 pounds of cherries in a little over 10 minutes. This is about one tenth of the time it would take to pail pick the same amount of fruit. And bruising is about the same with both methods.

This finding grew out of preliminary studies by U. S. Department of Agriculture specialists seeking ways to improve techniques in cherry picking. Labor is a major expense in cherry production, and a large, temporary, hard-to-find labor force is needed for harvesting by present methods.

Another promising method developed at the Michigan Agricultural Experiment Station was tested by the USDA researchers. This harvesting technique, which also calls for a net, was less speedy but greatly reduced bruising. Cherries loosened from the tree with the fingertips and allowed to fall into the net were bruised only slightly when they struck twigs or branches during their fall. These cherries kept well for a week at 35 degrees F with no spoilage, and only a trivial amount of scald (a damaged condition which follows bruising) developed. In 10 tests with 4 pickers, this type of net harvesting yielded an average of 36 percent more cherries than pail picking in the same amount of time.

Comparing the advantages of the two methods: branch shaking greatly speeds harvesting and cuts labor needs, but bruising is about the same as in pail picking; the Michigan approach of picking into nets greatly reduces bruising and speeds harvesting to a smaller extent.

Another possible advantage of the branch shaking method is a rough separation of cull and good cherries. Culls, loosely attached to the tree, will fall first, good cherries later. In one test, a preliminary shaking produced cherries containing about half culls. Later shaking produced mostly good cherries.

The USDA researchers are continuing study of both methods.

USDA 1861 (7-58)

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Soybean Pod Loss May Not Reduce Yields

Soybean growers shouldn't get excited if they see pods on the ground after poor weather conditions. That extra pod loss doesn't necessarily mean less money in the farmer's pocket.

In fact, Mother Nature may well compensate for the pod loss by increasing seed size in the pods that remain. This often happens when temperature extremes, high humidity, excessive rain or hail storms take a heavy toll of pods.

USDA researchers explain it this way:

Soybeans can lose up to 40 percent of their pods and still produce a normal yield. A loss of only 10 percent of the pods can increase seed size. Removing 80 percent of the pods may only cut the yield in half, because of an increase in seed size.

Loss of pods causes larger and heavier seeds because the normal leaf area supplies food to a smaller-than-normal number of seeds, which thus get plenty.

Removal of leaves after pods are set, however, decreases seed size and production. Fewer leaves means less nourishment for the large number of seeds.

Pod removal and leaf loss affect composition of the seeds, too. Removing the pods can increase the protein, sugar, and leaf-starch content, and can decrease the oil and ash. Removing the leaves, on the other hand, can decrease the protein and oil content.

USDA 1862 (7-58)

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U. S. Farming Still Highly Diversified Despite Automation

Despite continuing developments in mechanization and automation in agriculture, farming in the United States remains highly diversified, not only in crops produced but also in size of acreage, in labor spent in production and amount invested in land and equipment.

A recent report by the U. S. Department of Agriculture on farm costs and returns on family-operated farms for 1957 lists 31 major types of commercial farms and 18 important farming areas in the United States.

The different types of farms vary considerably in acreage and intensity of use. For example, farms range in size from an average of 10 acres on poultry farms to an average of 13,340 acres per sheep ranch in the Southwest. Little or no land is cropped on these two types of farms.

Farms with more intensive cropping range from an average of 29 acres harvested on high-labor intensive tobacco farms, to around 425 acres on grain-roughage livestock farms.

Average labor used per acre of cropland ranges from 135 hours on tobacco farms, to 8½ hours on grain-roughage livestock farms.

Total investments per farm also vary considerably among types of farms. Peanut-cotton farms averaged a total investment of $10,530 in 1957, while sheep ranches in the Southwest averaged $177,770. Machinery and equipment investments ranged from $1,800 per farm on peanut-cotton and poultry farms to nearly $17,000 on wheat-pea farms.

There is a wide range in total investments within individual types of farms, too. Corn Belt farms, for example, range from less than $40,000 to more than $100,000 per farm.

USDA 1906 (7-58)

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Farm Fillers

Woodlands pasture is poor fare for cattle. Studies in Illinois show nearly 18 acres of woodland are needed in a normal year to maintain the body weight of a 700-pound steer during the pasturing season. A similar steer lost 75 pounds by July 20 on 12 acres of woodland pasture. Grasses under woodland shade have less carbohydrates and other nutrients than grasses in open pastures.

Heavy grazing of animals on sloping woodland increased water runoff in one year from 197 gallons to 9,308 gallons per acre, according to a Wisconsin study. Grazing packed the soil, reduced leaf litter, and lowered rates of moisture absorption. Tree growth also was slowed.

When only fast growing trees are left in a woodland, there is more room for growth. Quality will be better, seeding easier. And growth rate may increase twofold or threefold within 5 years after poor stock is removed.

USDA 1907 (7-58)

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Small Farmer Important in Timber Industry

The small tree farmer is a pretty important person in the timber industry. In fact, he makes up a dominant part of the total number of farm and other private ownerships of commercial forest lands.

According to a review of the Nation's timber resources by the U. S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service ("Timber Resources for America's Future"), holdings of less than 100 acres account for 86 percent of all private holdings.

These small holdings include about 121 million acres, representing one-fourth of all commercial forest lands--approximately as much as all public holdings combined.

The study shows 64 percent of the holdings of less than 100 acres are found in the Northern States. Only 14 percent of the small farms are found in the West.

Medium and large farm forest holdings of more than 5,000 acres are concentrated in the West.

USDA 1908 (7-58)

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Even Eggs Can Be Marketed Through Vending Machines

Selling eggs through automatic vending machines offers some advantages to poultrymen, but it will not pay unless the volume sold is fairly large and steady. Possibilities of profit appear to be greater when the machine is located on the farm where the eggs are produced.

According to a study by Cornell University marketing specialists of automatic egg vendors in five Northeastern States, the break-even point between profit and loss on a farm-located vending machine is 99 dozens of eggs per week, and for non-farm vendors it is 141 dozens per week. This is due to the greater cost of maintaining a machine away from the farm.

Among 18 machine operations surveyed, farm-located machines averaged 132 dozens sold per week, while non-farm machines sold only 51 dozens per week on the average. The successful farm-located vending machines provided somewhat higher prices to the poultryman-producer for his eggs, and a little lower prices to the consumer than other retail outlets. They offered convenience to both producer and consumer, and gave the producer an opportunity to develop a market for high quality eggs.

Location of the machine should be a major consideration in setting up an egg vendor, according to the Cornell researchers. Like other farm sales stands, it should be located near a busy highway and not far from a sizeable city. It should attract attention and be attractive, and parking should be convenient. All farm vending machines were housed in wooden sheds or shelters, not only to protect the machine but to provide promotional space.

A vending operation is more likely to be successful suggest the Cornell specialists if it is started in spring or early summer because this allows time for customers to build a habit of using the machine in favorable weather.

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Ala., Ariz., Ark., Calif., Fla., Ga., Ky., La., Miss., Mo., N. Mex., N. C., Okla., S. C., Tenn., Tex., Va.

Lint Cleaners Could Reduce Profit from High Grade Cotton This Year

Contrary to the belief of many cotton producers and gin operators, use of lint cleaners is not always a profitable practice in ginning machine-picked cotton.

Cleaning high-grade cotton frequently results in reduced bale value through weight loss that more than offsets any increase in price per pound, according to a report by the U. S. Department of Agriculture of a study of the effects of lint cleaning on machine-picked cotton in California gins.

On the other hand, says the report, if lint is trashy but has good color, lint cleaning should increase the returns to farmers. In seasons like 1957-1958, when high grade cotton is scarce and premiums for grade are unusually large, lint cleaning should be quite profitable on all cotton that might grade up through Strict Low Middling.

One of the principal conclusions of the USDA study is that selective use of lint cleaners would be a highly desirable development in the ginning industry and it would offer a real opportunity for increased returns to cotton growers. Not only cotton grades but current or prospective price differentials for the various grades should be taken into account. When premiums and discounts for grade are high, lint cleaning is most likely to be profitable for grades ranging down from Strict Low Middling. The economic advantage of cleaning higher grades is always questionable.

(over)

Lint cleaning is a relatively new process and its effects on cotton properties have not yet been fully assessed. But lint cleaning has been accepted widely by cotton growers and ginners as a way to increase bale values. Also, once a lint cleaner is installed in a gin, ginners have preferred to use it on all bales ginned in order to simplify the operation, and growers have not objected.

Textile men tend to be more critical of the effects of lint cleaning. Some say that excessive machining at the gin decreases fiber length uniformity and that it breaks up the remaining trash into small particles which become compacted with the fiber. They claim that, as a result, processing costs at the mill are increased and product quality is lowered.

Both foreign and domestic buyers of U. S. cotton have commented unfavorably on lint-cleaned cotton, and with the installation of double and triple tandem lint cleaners, such comments are increasing. Since such reactions affect the competitive position of cotton in relation to synthetic and other non-cotton fibers, further research on the actual effects of lint cleaning is underway.

USDA 1974 (7-58)

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City People Eat More than Farmers of Some Essential Vitamins

The dining table in a farm home may be laden with huge platters of food, just as many of us picture it, but it doesn't necessarily mean that farmers eat better than city people.

It is true that farm people eat more food than city people, as measured in terms of calories. But a survey by the U. S. Department of Agriculture indicated that some farm diets may be less well balanced than city diets. That is, they are more likely to fall short of recommended amounts of some essential vitamins.

Farm diets in both North and South were found to average lower in vitamin A and vitamin C than city diets. Farm families used more milk, grains, fats, and sugars. But they used less fruits and vegetables (except potatoes), and were significantly shorter on vitamin C-rich citrus fruits and vitamin A-rich dark green and deep yellow vegetables.

The USDA survey was made in the spring when gardens might not yet be producing much, and supplies of home-canned food might be low. Later in the season, more vegetables might have been available on the farms, the surveyors noted.

Farm diets were also found to be somewhat less responsive to family income than city diets. Farm diets tend to be influenced by the amount and kinds of food produced at home, for which no direct cash expenditure is made. But in both farm and city families, the nutrient with the closest relationship to income is vitamin C. People with more money to spend use more fruits and vegetables, particularly citrus fruit which alone provides over a third of the vitamin C in the average U. S. diet.

USDA 2044 (7-58)

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Plenty of Shelled, High-quality Nutmeats Will Be Coming Your Way

Research has found a convenient way to provide consumers with shelled nuts as high in quality as those we used to shell by the fire on a winter evening.

Packaged English walnut meats with a built-in protection against discoloration and rancid flavor are the result of cooperative studies by the U. S. Department of Agriculture and a large Western grower cooperative. The findings should help to bring increasing supplies of these nuts from California and Oregon to consumers across the country in an attractive and highly acceptable form. Shelling saves transportation costs, too.

The nuts will appear on grocery shelves sealed in transparent, moisture-proof plastic bags. The moisture content within the bags is adjusted to a level of slightly more than 3 percent. And the nutmeats are sprayed with a very light coating of tasteless, harmless antioxidant to retard spoilage.

Scientists seeking ways to improve the storage life of shelled nuts found that walnuts in the shell contain natural antioxidants in their skins that protect them against rancidity. Shelling breaks the skins and exposes the nutmeats to oxygen, which plays a principal role in the spoilage process. Moisture also has an effect on the rate of spoilage.

By controlling both moisture and oxidation, the new packaging process will make possible plentiful, year-round supplies of deliciously fresh nutmeats on every grocer's shelves.

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New Method Forecasts Exact Harvest Date for Peaches

When fruit ripens either before or later than expected, a lot of people are inconvenienced and a lot of money may be lost. A new and more accurate method of predicting harvest date, devised by the U. S. Department of Agriculture, may eliminate much of the confusion.

Each peach season, for example, between 3,000 and 4,000 migrant workers move into Mesa County, Colorado, to pick and pack the Standard Elberta crop. If the peaches ripen later than expected, the workers stand idly by, or move on to other jobs. But if the fruit ripens too soon, there may be a shortage of labor to pick and pack it.

USDA marketing specialists have worked out a new way of forecasting maturity dates for these Elberta peaches which shows promise of being more accurate than the present system. Up to now, growers have figured on 126 days from time of full bloom until the first carload leaves for market. Actually the growing period may take anywhere from 119 to 131 days. The new system of forecasting is based on adjustments up or down from 126 days for unusual temperature fluctuations during the growing period, and for earliness of bloom.

In a year of abnormal temperatures, growers sometimes miss the harvesting date by as much as 6 or 7 days. The new procedure, tested against temperature records and harvesting dates from 1931 through 1957, appears to work well even in the most unusual seasons. This year it is being tried for the first time under actual field conditions.

If the new forecasting method for Standard Elberta peaches proves accurate, perhaps similar systems can be worked out for other fruit crops in other locations. This would benefit everyone involved in the sudden enormous burst of activity set off when large quantities of ripening fruit reach the proper stage for harvesting. This includes not only producers and pickers, but buyers, shippers, retailers and government inspectors.

USDA 2046 (7-58)

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Farm Fillers

High quality silage can be produced in trenches, bunkers, and other horizontal silos if the silage is packed properly. In studies at the U. S. Department of Agriculture's Beltsville, Md., research center, consistently good results were obtained when silage was mounded, enclosed with an airtight plastic cover stretched tight and pressed down to eliminate air pockets, sealed snugly at the edges, and weighted overall (usually with sawdust). Running a tractor back and forth over the silage as it is being packed forces out air and reduces opportunity for development of the oxygen-consuming bacteria that cause spoilage.

Seeds quickly lose quality if they are not kept dry. U. S. Department of Agriculture researchers are seeking better ways to test seeds for moisture content. They are also seeking better moisture proof containers for storage and marketing.

To use insecticides effectively, remember that proper application is often more important to killing power than a large amount, warn USDA (or your State) entomologists. Be sure to follow the directions given by the manufacturer in mixing and applying poisonous materials.

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Milk in Calves' Diet Reduces Stomach and Intestinal Parasites

Where stomach and intestinal worms are a problem in raising calves, it may be possible to avoid early worm treatments by continuing milk in their diet.

Evidence that milk discourages development of parasites in the digestive tract has come from several scientific sources.

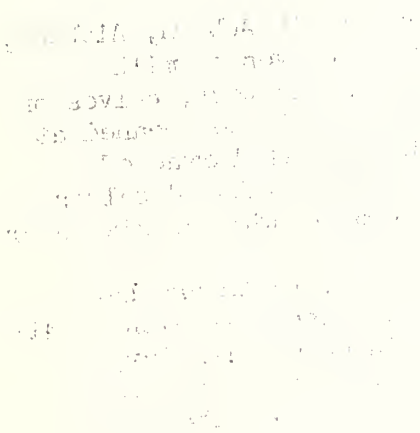
At the Regional Animal Disease Research Laboratory in Auburn, Alabama, U. S. Department of Agriculture scientists found that calves on milk harbored fewer of several common species of worms. In one test, calves on milk plus grain and hay were compared with calves that had been weaned at 12 to 16 weeks. All calves were infected artificially with larvae of large stomach worms and then killed a month later. The milk-fed calves gained better than the other group and had fewer worms at time of slaughter.

In another experiment at the same place, calves fed grain and hay along with milk were compared with similar-aged calves fed milk alone. All these had been raised free of parasites, then were infected with large stomach worms and killed 4 to 5 weeks later. The calves that were fed nothing but milk had smaller worms and far fewer of them than the other calves, but their restricted diet prevented them from gaining as well as the calves that received grain and hay as well as milk.

To find out about worm infections that are acquired naturally by grazing, the scientists put calves on pasture for 54 days. All got a grain supplement, and half the animals were given milk twice a day. There was no significant difference in number of stomach worms when the calves were slaughtered, but the calves on milk had fewer small and large intestinal worms (Cooperia species and Oesophagostomum radiatum).

Other researchers that have noted milk's effect on worms include a USDA parasitologist at Mississippi Agricultural Experiment Station, who found that unweaned lambs had far fewer worms than weaned ones when both were exposed to natural infection. At the Department's Beltsville, Md., research center other scientists found that pigs fed skim milk expelled worms and made better gains than similar pigs receiving no milk.

The researchers have no definite explanation for the milk's effect on parasites. One possibility is that milk reduces stomach acidity and this tends to reduce the number and size of worms.



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Seed Stocks from 60 Years of Plant Exploration to Be Available to Plant Breeders

A National Seed Storage Laboratory, now being completed at Fort Collins, Colorado, will shortly house the world's greatest pool of seeds for research purposes.

The laboratory, built by the U. S. Department of Agriculture, will be a repository for valuable breeding stocks gathered from all parts of the world in 60 years of plant exploration. Many of these are wild relatives or primitive varieties of some of our most important farm crops. Among them may be found many useful characteristics that could be bred into more highly developed crops--characteristics such as disease and insect resistance, cold hardiness, heat tolerance, or superior growth qualities.

Plant breeders attempting to improve our commercial crop plants will be able to draw upon this rich source of germ plasm for plant characteristics they are seeking. The seeds will be kept under temperature and humidity conditions that will keep them alive as long as possible--in some cases for several decades. Arrangements will be made to plant and reproduce the seed as necessary.

Any potentially valuable seeds accepted from private sources for storage in the National Seed Storage Laboratory will become the property of the United States Government, but they will be made available to qualified plant breeders without charge.

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Conn., Fla., Ga., Ind., Ky., Md., Mo., N.C., Ohio, Pa., S.C., Tenn., Va., W.Va., Wisc.

Increased Crop Justifies Expense of Irrigating Tobacco

Irrigation will pay off in raising tobacco. A 7-year cooperative study by U. S. Department of Agriculture and State scientists in Florida, Georgia, North Carolina and Virginia showed that irrigation was highly profitable in 7 out of 10 years and, on the whole, it increased efficiency enough to justify the cost.

In tests at Tifton, Georgia, average annual yields per acre were 254 pounds more in irrigated than in non-irrigated tobacco. Annual gross income per acre was increased by $181.74.

In 4 out of 7 years, yields increased by more than 300 pounds of cured leaf per acre and gross income increased by more than $200 per acre. In only 2 of the 7 years was there no benefit from irrigation.

Regular irrigations from the time the plants were knee high until mid-July gave best yields and best leaf quality. Irrigations before the plants were knee high tended to retard root growth and to leach fertilizer.

Semi-weekly applications of one-half inch of water when there had been no rain gave the best results. Compared to weekly applications of three-fourths to one inch, this plan reduces the possibility of overwatering that sometimes occurs when rain closely follows an irrigation. Scientists believe the air-moisture-temperature balance in the soil is also better under the semi-weekly rather than under the weekly plan, and both nitrogen leaching and plant drowning are less likely.

Irrigated tobacco had a slightly lower nicotine content than non-irrigated and a somewhat slower burning rate--other less tangible advantages of irrigation.

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Ala., Ariz., Ark., Calif., Ga., La., Miss., Okla., S. C., Tex.

Cotton Needs More Frequent Irrigation in Late Summer

As a cotton plant develops in size and leaf area, its rate of water use increases. Therefore, more frequent irrigations are likely to be needed in late July and August, when temperatures are highest and the plants are at their peak of flowering and boll development.

No exact schedule for late season irrigation can be worked out, says _____ in answer to many questions from cotton growers about how often and how late to irrigate. Many factors are involved, according to _____, such as type of soil, size of plants, depth of roots, humidity, temperature and hours of sunlight.

The cotton plant itself is usually the best indicator of its need for additional moisture. After flowering begins, the plants should grow steadily, but not luxuriantly. Squares at the top should be rather prominent, with a few flowers readily observable among the top leaves. When only leaves are noticeable, the plants are growing too rapidly. Too many flowers, on the other hand, indicates restricted growth, probably due to too little moisture.

Also, careful observation of a field of cotton will reveal a change in appearance of plants just before wilting occurs. Foliage will have a slightly blueish tinge, and in dryer spots the plants will appear somewhat darker.

Another guide to moisture need, according to _____, is the amount of tender green growth at the top of the plant in relation to reddish coloring lower on the stalk. Two or three inches of tender green stem above the reddish colored stalks indicate that it is time to irrigate. If the red color moves closer to the terminal buds, wilting will follow shortly--possibly before water can be applied.

In answer to questions about how late in the season to continue irrigating, _____ suggests three factors to consider: soil texture, degree of maturity of plants, and climatic conditions before harvest.

Light textured soils which require irrigation every 7-10 days should be irrigated up to a later date than heavy soils with better moisture-holding capacity.

The more advanced the crop, the sooner irrigation can cease. But it is important to have sufficient soil moisture during development of late set bolls. Moisture should be available at least 40-45 days after the date of flowering to insure full development.

Lack of moisture at the end of the season will lead to premature opening of late set bolls with shorter staple and immature fiber. But irrigation too late in the fall will delay maturity and may increase lodging, leaf growth, and boll rot. When the late bolls are fairly well advanced, irrigation should be discontinued.

Insufficient penetration of water into the soil is sometimes a problem in late season irrigation, says _____. To find whether the moisture is soaking into the root zone and not just wetting the surface, he suggests checking with a shovel, soil tube, or auger.

Note to editors: This information on late season cotton irrigation was obtained from the U. S. Cotton Field Station at Shafter, California.

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Ala., Ariz., Ark., Calif., Ga., La., Miss., Okla., S. C., Tex.

Reducing Irrigations May Control Rank Growth in Cotton

Many questions are asked each year about how to control rank growth in cotton. This lush growth may take the form of additional height or excessive branching.

In irrigated cotton, vegetative growth can often be slowed by delaying the irrigation schedule, suggests _____. (State or local authority) When plants are growing rapidly, frequent irrigations may encourage additional growth, and this can be cut be reducing the water supply.

Another method that is sometimes effective, according to _____, is to irrigate only every other row. This should work on most soils, except those that crack or are poorly leveled.

Irrigation, however, is not the only cause of rank growth, reminds _____. A heavy early shedding due either to improper moisture conditions or poor insect control can also lead to this condition. Other causes are crowded plants and over-fertilization. Sometimes, in fertile soils and under some cropping sequences, rank growth is produced normally and is difficult to control.

Topping rank-growing cotton which has reached 4 to 4½ feet in height by the time it should be in full bloom may aid its maturing. This practice allows more sunlight and air to penetrate the plant, but it is recommended only if other methods fail to reduce growth. If topping is done early enough, the stalks become stronger and more rigid, lodging and boll rots may be reduced, and the yield may be increased.

Note to editors: This information was obtained from the U. S. Cotton Field Station at Shafter, Calif.

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How's Business at Your Roadside Farm Market?

Seemingly little things can spell success or failure for a roadside farm market.

_____ lists some things that roadside marketers
(State or local authority)
might consider if their sales volume this year has been disappointing.

First, is the location favorable? A well-traveled highway is, of course, essential. But studies show that people are more likely to stop when they are on their way to shop. A wise salesman locates on the right side of the road where many people pass on their way into town.

Equally important is convenience of shopping. Can motorists see your market from a distance, or have you installed a readable and attractive sign inviting them to stop and shop so many feet ahead? It's not safe to slam on brakes at a moment's impulse. And when prospective customers do stop, is there plenty of convenient parking space where it is easy to get off the highway and on again?

Other things that attract customers are high quality produce and fair market prices. Veteran salesmen have discovered that mixing good and poor quality merchandise pulls down the price of the whole lot. It pays to discard the poorer products, or separate them and offer them at a special low price. Customers will return if they find, by comparisons in town, that your products were a good buy.

Perhaps the most important thing of all in successful selling, some analysts have concluded, is a genuine liking for people. Thoughtful little things, like offering taste samples from a special tray, win friends and steady customers--and in the long run it's steady customers that make a business pay.

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Better Aid to Visiting Foreign Agriculturists To Be Discussed in Washington This Week

How can American agriculture and business help visiting foreign agriculturists to profit by our experience in strengthening the agriculture and economies of their own countries? To consider this general question of effective procedures, representatives of _____ (your Land-Grant College) are meeting in Washington this week (October 20-23 inclusive) with other workers in the field of foreign agricultural cooperation.

The conference will be conducted by the U. S. Department of Agriculture and the International Cooperation Administration with the cooperation of 50 Land Grant Colleges representing every State in the Union. It will bring together workers engaged in the foreign training program from 10 major government agencies, as well as representatives of farm organizations, educational institutions, foundations, and commercial interests.

The training program for visiting foreign agriculturists has provided guidance for more than 20,000 visitors to this country since 1949, according to the Department of Agriculture's Foreign Agricultural Service. About 2,700 visitors received such assistance in the year ending June 30, 1958.

A highlight of the conference will be a banquet address by Dr. Harlan Cleveland, dean of the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs of Syracuse University on the subject, "The Art of Interfering in Other Peoples' Affairs."

Other conference speakers include Dean D. H. Sieling, University of Massachusetts; Fred Sloan, State Program Leader, North Carolina; Frank J. Walrath, agricultural economist, University of Tennessee; James H. Smith, Jr., director, International Cooperation Administration; and Jack D. Gray, coordinator of foreign programs, Texas A. & M. College.

In addition to service from government agencies and Land Grant Colleges, the foreign agricultural training program draws upon the resources of approximately 470 private organizations and institutions throughout the United States as well as innumerable farmers and individual citizens who cooperate in providing agricultural training and study opportunities.

USDA 2832 (10-58)

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For Wash., Ore., Nev., Ariz., Utah, Idaho, Mont., Wyo., Colo., and N. Mex.

Furrow Planting May Make Up for Low Moisture in Seeding Grass on the Range

Planting grass seed in furrows may help to eliminate some of the risk involved in seeding arid rangeland.

Studies by the Utah Agricultural Experiment Station and the U. S. Department of Agriculture indicate that grass seed germinates earlier and starts off better on the dry plains when seeded in the bottom of a furrow. And the deeper the furrow the better, provided the soil is fairly stable.

In the USDA-Utah experiments, a 4-inch furrow significantly increased stands compared to results achieved with a 1-inch furrow. Water losses were greatly reduced in the deeper furrows because the soil in the furrow bottom was better protected from surface air movement and heat.

Desirable depth for furrows would vary in different types of soil, according to the range conservationists who took part in these studies. Deep furrowing helps to prevent rapid water runoff and checks erosion. But unstable soils may slough into the furrows and cover grass seed too deeply for germination. Or the seed may drown in water held too long in the furrows.

The Utah tests were made in shallow silt loam soil, composed about equally of sand, coarse silt, and fine silt and clay. Further testing should show to what extent the technique can be adapted to general use on rangeland.

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For Wash., Ore., Nev., Ariz., Utah, Idaho., Mont., Wyo., Colo., and N. Mex.

Green Manure Doesn't Pay on Drylands

Growing green manure crops, an accepted practice in humid areas, doesn't pay where rainfall averages less than 16 inches a year.

The practice of plowing under cover crops prior to planting wheat has been studied for many years by the U. S. Department of Agriculture and the Montana Agricultural Experiment Station at three locations on Montana drylands.

Plots that had been covered with green manure crops during part of the year gave lower average yields of spring wheat at all three locations. At Havre, green-manure plots outyielded fallowed plots in only 3 years out of 28. At Huntley, this happened in only 3 years out of 39, and at Moccasin, in 7 years out of 43.

In these tests, sweetclover and rye crops were used as a partial replacement for ordinary fallow periods. They were plowed under in late June or early July of the fallow years, and the land was then fallowed until time for planting the next wheat crop.

A sweetclover crop added only about 20 pounds of available nitrogen per acre to the soil--not enough to pay for land preparation and seeding. Rye added no nitrogen.

Chemical analysis of the soils at the conclusion of the experiments showed no evidence that the green manure crops had materially increased either nitrogen or carbon, indicators of organic matter in the soil.

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Tastier Turkeys--A Product of Research

Larding the turkey--rubbing it well with fat--before putting it into the oven helps to produce a well-browned exterior with plenty of juice and flavor inside.

Now U. S. Department of Agriculture home economics and poultry researchers find that some of the "larding" can be done while the bird is still alive. Adding 8 percent lard to turkey rations produces birds that cook to a rich, even brown and score high in all the characteristics that add up to high quality poultry meat.

In tests at the Department's Beltsville, Md., research center, lard-fed turkeys gained weight more quickly on the same amount of feed and had a smoother, plumper finish at marketing age than turkeys eating no added fat. After cooking, their meat was evaluated favorably for flavor, tenderness and juiciness by a panel of taste experts. Mechanical measurements also showed these birds to be just as tender and somewhat juicier than turkeys fed no lard.

As with other turkeys, these birds roasted to equal tenderness in an uncovered pan at 325° F., or at 450° F. in a pan covered except for the last half hour of cooking.

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Tea Talk Teasers

A "magic" milk concentrate that will keep indefinitely on the kitchen cupboard shelf and, when added to water, will instantly retransform into pure, fresh-tasting, whole milk has long been sought by the dairy industry. This would match the high-quality non-fat dry milk now available.

Thanks to scientists of the U. S. Department of Agriculture and others such a goal is now within sight. Dry, whole milk flakes now being produced in the laboratory will keep 2 to 3 months at room temperature. Research will continue until a longer storage life is achieved and bulkiness of the milk flakes can be further reduced. A final problem will be to develop a low-cost industrial production process to replace present laboratory methods.

More than 4 million bushels of U. S. fall-crop potatoes will be converted into potato flakes this year by 6 commercial processors, reports the U. S. Department of Agriculture. The dehydrated flakes should be widely available on grocery store shelves for instant reconversion into an improved mashed potato product.

Improved plastics will almost certainly play an important role in the science wonder-world of tomorrow. Chemists at the U. S. Department of Agriculture have discovered that animal fats--largely a surplus product today--can be used to convert hard, brittle plastics into permanently soft, flexible, tough materials that will process into many durable, high-quality products. Some vinyl stearate--a softening agent for plastics made from animal fats and acetylene--is already being produced industrially.

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Raw Apples Are Still A Favorite

Despite American fondness for apple pie, raw apples are still a favorite.

Statistics gathered by the crop reporting board of the U. S. Department of Agriculture show that Delicious apples are the top favorite of the American public. This strictly-for-eating-raw variety has averaged 21 percent of U. S. production in recent years.

McIntosh and Winesap, good both for eating raw and for cooking, rank next in favor, each averaging about 10 percent of the total crop.

Rome Beauty, Jonathan, York Imperial and Stayman complete a list of 7 leading varieties which, together, supply 2 out of every 3 apples consumed in the United States.

Other varieties in descending order of production importance include Yellow Newtown, Baldwin, Golden Delicious, Gravenstein, Rhode Island Greening, Cortland, Grimes Golden, Wealthy, Northern Spy, Ben Davis and Black Twig.

Except for Delicious, all the other varieties are used for cooking or eating, according to individual preference. Apples in abundance to satisfy all tastes and uses are available this fall.

USDA 2996 (10-58)

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Electromechanization Will Cut Farm Labor and Increase Productivity

Electricity on the farm is like a sleeping genie which can spring to life at his master's bidding to eliminate drudgery and raise production beyond the wildest dreams of a few years ago. With 95 percent of American farms now electrified, many farmers could take much greater advantage of the possibilities in electromechanization for saving labor and increasing their productivity, says _____.

Among the toughest jobs in dairy farming, for instance, are handling materials like hay, silage, bedding, concentrates, and manure. According to the University of Massachusetts, the quantity of material handled annually for a 40-cow herd amounts to a minimum of 760 tons, or 19 tons per cow. But electric motors and conveyors can relieve the dairyman of much of this labor. Silage can be automatically removed from a vertical silo and dropped directly onto a mechanical bunk feeder, saving an estimated 200 hours a year labor. Several types of gutter cleaners have been developed, and Michigan State University reports that it takes only 80 kilowatt-hours to remove and load 212 tons of manure a year from a typical 35-cow barn. Taking full advantage of such innovations along with efficient new milking methods, one dairy specialist estimates that one can milk, feed, and care for 100 cows during an 8 hour day.

Electromechanization is bringing some dramatic changes to the poultry business too, according to _____. In an up-to-date laying house, perches, waterers, and feeders are installed

in tiers over a droppings pit. Several times a week, a barn cleaner removes the droppings. Forced ventilation and solar heat make a dry house even in damp, cold weather. The house is also equipped with electric lights, with a time clock wired into the circuit to provide 14 hours of illumination during short fall and winter days. And a continuous automatic supply of fresh water also helps to keep egg production up.

Electricity can be used to control environment--temperature, humidity, air movement--and these have a bearing on the health and productivity of livestock. The University of California found that hogs averaging 100 pounds in weight gained the next 100 pounds on less feed at temperatures between 70 and 72 degrees than at any other. At 200 pounds, they utilized feed most efficiently at 60 degrees. In another experiment, beef cattle gained an extra pound a day when a fan was used to blow air over the herd when the temperature was 100 degrees or higher. And sows in Oklahoma farrowed more and stronger pigs when they were kept cool with water sprinklers during the hot summer of 1956.

These are only a few examples of the countless ways that electromechanization can improve efficiency on the farm. Your county agent (or other State source) can suggest ways that electricity could be put to use on your farm, suggests _____.

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Farm Fillers

Though the U. S. population ranks among the world's foremost meat-eaters, consumption per person of red meats is considerably less here than in several other countries, reports the U. S. Department of Agriculture's Foreign Agricultural Service. Argentine citizens, for instance, ate their way through an average of 242 pounds per person last year, compared to 159 pounds per person eaten in the United States. New Zealanders averaged 229 pounds of red meat per person, and Australians followed close with 221 pounds each. Only others to exceed us were the people of Uraguay, who ate 168 pounds per person last year.

Aging poultry at least 12 hours before freezing increases its tenderness, according to U. S. Department of Agriculture research. And birds aged before being cut up are more tender than those aged afterward. Scalding above 125° F also reduces tenderness.

A continuous supply of fresh water for laying hens will pay off in higher egg production. Researchers at Oregon State College found that pullets drank 25 percent more water during freezing weather when it was available to them at all times. Egg production increased by as much as 20 percent.

When done by hand, watering consumes about a third of the time spent in caring for chickens. An automatic water supply eliminates this time-consuming chore.

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Abundant Food at Slightly Lower Prices in Prospect for Next Year

Food in growing variety and abundance will grace America's tables again next year, predicts the U. S. Department of Agriculture. And the bill, for some items at least, may be a little less.

Prospects are for more meat, especially pork, and more broilers in 1959 than in 1958. Vegetable and fruit supplies should also be somewhat heavier with the likelihood of more nearly normal weather conditions than was experienced this year. Lower prices will accompany increased supplies for some items, which may make the total food bill a little lower than the 1958 level.

Nutritionally speaking, greater supplies of citrus fruit and some vegetables will mean more Vitamin C in the average person's diet, say USDA home economists. Greater pork supplies will add more thiamine, one of the B Vitamins. Both these nutrients tend to be short of recommended levels in some families' diets.

Another happy prospect concerns new food products which will continue to appear on grocery shelves and family tables next year. Presenting familiar foods in fresh combinations and forms, these will add variety and convenience to the meals of families who like to experiment with new dishes. They will also save time and work for the growing numbers of wives employed outside the home.

USDA 3320 (11-58)

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Budgeting Helps Families to Fill Needs and Wants, Say USDA Family Economists

Requests for family budgeting help received by the U. S. Department of Agriculture's Institute of Home Economics and by State Extension Services show that many families are still interested in planning their expenditures.

Budgeting is the best way for families to get the things they need most and want most from their available financial resources, said Department of Agriculture home economists speaking at the annual Agricultural Outlook Conference in Washington, D. C.

Greatly increased use in recent years of consumer credit has suggested to some observers that installment buying has reduced interest in family budgeting. But easy availability of consumer credit does not reduce need for financial planning in order to make the family dollar stretch as far as possible, declared Miss Janis Moore, USDA home economist. Budgeting helps families to understand how much they can afford to undertake in the way of credit purchases, or to lay aside sums for future needs.

To help families plan for acquiring and replacing large-expenditure items, the Department of Agriculture is making studies, based on actual family experience, of the length of useful life that might be expected of various large items of household furnishing and equipment.

Studies completed so far indicate that washing machines used by one owner last for about 9 years. Electric refrigerators, electric ranges, and gas ranges last about 15 years. Vacuum cleaners are kept in use for an average of 18 years for upright types, 15 years for tank models. Wool living room rugs can be expected to serve about 14 years. Used items last approximately half as long as new ones.

How long an individual family keeps any item of equipment, say USDA home economists, depends upon a number of influences such as economic circumstances and the lure of new models. Individual variations should also be expected for very hard or very light wear and the kind of care and upkeep given a particular item.

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U. S. Will Exchange Farm Surpluses for Knowledge of World Agriculture

Under plans being developed by the U. S. Department of Agriculture, foreign funds earned from the sale of U. S. farm surpluses abroad will be used to probe secrets of world agriculture that will be useful to American farmers.

Research carried out in other countries, USDA scientists say, can supply us with much fundamental information about foreign plants, animals, soils, and agricultural markets.

It can add to our breeding stocks--the supply of plants and animals with desirable characteristics that might be used in developing better breeds and varieties for this country. We may learn how to cope with plant and animal diseases and insect pests that could invade this country at some future date. Or we may find beneficial diseases and parasites that could help us to control some of the pests we already have. We could learn more of what happens to soils that have been cultivated over long periods, and how to handle various types of soil under different conditions. And we can learn a great deal more about the potential agricultural markets of the world.

Some of all this will be bought with funds earned by the sale abroad of U. S. surplus commodities under the Agricultural Trade Development and Assistance Act of 1954 (Public Law 480) which provided for payments in foreign currency. Research will be carried out under contracts or grants, and payment will be made in the currency of the country where the work is done.

Foreign funds equivalent to almost $4 million have been earmarked for farm, marketing, and forestry research in Indonesia, Pakistan, Finland, Yugoslavia, Poland, India, Israel, and Chile. This work is expected to expand to include other countries.

Some research into utilization of farm products has already been started in Great Britain, Finland, Italy and Isreal. Other countries also are expected to enter into agreements of this type, for which $6.7 million has been allocated.

Meanwhile, teams from the Department of Agriculture are currently surveying Europe, the Middle East, the Far East, and Central and South America to find additional countries willing to sanction such research and to locate scientists who might participate.

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U. S. Agricultural Surpluses Are Part of World Supply Problem

World agricultural production is expected to reach a new high next year. But there will continue to be food-short areas in some parts of the world while other countries struggle with agricultural surplus problems, according to a newly-published report by the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

New heights predicted for world agricultural output in 1958-59 will raise the total to 13 percent above the 1952-54 average, 33 percent above the 1935-39 average. The increase should bring production per person up to the record world level achieved in 1956-57.

But, unfortunately, this does not mean that all the world's people will be well fed. A great problem area for food continues to exist in the Far East where per capita production remains below prewar levels. Causes of this situation, which may grow worse instead of better in the next few years, are: population growth, exhausted soils, and lag behind the rest of the world in technological development.

Shortage of foreign exchange is a major obstacle to a smooth flow of food from surplus to deficit areas, the report indicates. Demand for raw materials has slackened somewhat, adding to balance-of-payments difficulties in less industrially-developed countries.

Export policies of the Soviet Union and Communist China, which with the United States accounted for much of the world crop production increase this year, may sharpen competition for world agricultural markets. Any change in Soviet or Communist Chinese exports will depend upon political as well as economic factors, the USDA report suggests.

USDA 3393 (12-58)

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USDA Scientists Study Ecosystems

The word ecosystem may look like a new phonetic spelling for rebounding sound waves, but actually it has nothing to do with sound.

According to U. S. Department of Agriculture scientists, an ecosystem is made up of many interrelated factors and influences that comprise an insect's physical environment. As such, it holds the key to whether an insect will reproduce, multiply and flourish, or simply "fade away."

In our constant struggle with insect competitors for crops and food supplies, we need to know more about all the things that influence an insect's behavior, say the USDA scientists. We need to know the effect of climate and weather conditions on insect populations. We need to know more about insect diseases (yes, insects get sick, just as people do), and about parasites and predators of the insect world. And we need to know more about host plants that quietly nurture insect enemies until they are ready to swoop down and destroy valuable crops.

A study of the interrelationships in ecosystems will make it possible to improve measures used to control insect pests, say the scientists. Use of insecticides, which also become a part of an insect's ecosystem, is not enough--as illustrated by our continuing problems with insect enemies. But insecticides may be more effective when used with greater knowledge of other factors affecting the insect.

In a study of the ecosystem of the green peach aphid pest of tobacco, 8 factors were found to have measurable influence on the insect. These were temperature, rainfall, 4 host plants (tobacco, turnips, collards, and wild mustard) and 2 diseases (a fungus and an unidentified condition described as "hot-weather disease").

Aphid numbers increased in the fall when host plants were in good condition. But in winter, when cool weather slowed reproduction, high humidity and wet soil favored fungus disease and aphid numbers decreased. The aphids were not killed directly by temperature, but their population declined further when extreme low temperatures damaged host plants. When spring brought higher temperatures and dry weather, surviving aphids increased their population. But this trend was reversed again when the hot-weather disease struck and killed many of their offspring.

Knowledge such as this will lead the way to more effective control measures that will supplement or encourage natural controls.

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For Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas

Stern Measures Needed to Save Grasslands from Honey Mesquite

Honey mesquite is so destructive to grasslands and livestock grazing on semidesert land that it may pay to grub it out by hoe in areas where the necessary labor is available.

Inroads of honey mesquite into the semidesert ranges of southeastern Arizona, southern New Mexico, and western Texas threaten continued livestock production in that area, say scientists working at the U. S. Department of Agriculture's Jornada Experimental Range in southern New Mexico. On the Jornada Range, for example, mesquite-dominated land increased from 13 percent in 1915 to 49 percent in 1957. And this happened not only on overgrazed land but also on land where grazing has been carefully regulated or even nonexistent.

A large-scale mesquite control project early this year (1958) on the Jornada Range showed that organized grubbing can be both practical and economical. Total labor cost in grubbing 4,265 acres of mesquite at 44 cents per acre was $1,876.

These clearing costs are reasonable compared to the long-term values gained, say the USDA scientists. Cooperative arrangements between neighboring ranchers are suggested as one possible way to obtain the labor necessary to clear up mesquite-infested ranges.

Mesquite development passes through three stages in invading the sandy soils of the Southwest. First young plants are hidden among the grasses. Then older plants appear with sand blowouts among them. Finally, unreclaimable mesquite sand dunes dominate the land. Between the first and last stages, average capacity of the range per section may be reduced from as much as 18 animal-units of grazing per year to 3 or less.

In the USDA operation, only plants with crowns measuring 30 inches or less were grubbed, except for occasional larger plants in light stands. The highest number of plants for economical grubbing was set at 150 per acre, but areas with occasional dense stands were also grubbed. The whole area, grubbed by 11 men working at 30-foot intervals, averaged 82 mesquite plants per acre. Total labor used was 2,531 manhours, plus 84 hours of supervision.

The New Mexico work underlines a need for grubbing light stands before they get worse. More expensive measures would be required for larger plants in denser stands, say the scientists. Careful grubbing is necessary to completely sever the plant below the budding area of the root--about 4 inches below ground surface where plants are not mounded with sand.

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For N. C., S. C., Ga., Fla., Ala., Miss., and La.

Research Develops Two New Blueberry Varieties for Southeast:

Two new varieties of the rabbiteye blueberry, Garden Blue and Menditoo, suitable for home and farm gardens in an area ranging south from central North Carolina to northern Florida and west along the Gulf Coast to Louisiana, have been released for propagation by the U. S. Department of Agriculture and the North Carolina Agricultural Experiment Station.

The two varieties represent a further step toward development of rabbiteye blueberries of size and flavor to provide a new commercial enterprise for small fruit growers of the Southeast. Compared to highland blueberries, rabbiteye berries grow on a wider range of soils, are more heat and drought resistant, less sensitive to soil acidity, and require a shorter cold rest period.

Neither of the cooperating agencies--the North Carolina Station or the Department's Agricultural Research Service--have plants of the new varieties available for distribution. A list of sources of plants can be obtained from F. E. Correll, Department of Horticulture, North Carolina Agricultural Experiment Station, Raleigh.

Garden Blue plants are described as consistently high yielders of medium sized fruit. The plant is vigorous, upright, spreading in growth habit with the fruit well distributed on long fruiting shoots which makes picking easy. Garden Blue berries average 130-135 per half-pint cup. They are round, firm, blue, with good flavor and a small dry scar. In eastern North Carolina the fruit begins ripening in mid-June and is finished in mid-July.

Menditoo is notable for its highly flavored, large sized berries that average 95 to 100 per half-pint cup. The berries are round, medium firm, dark blue, free of grit cells, and they have small dry scars. The fruit begins ripening about a week later than Garden Blue and ripens over a 6- to 8-week period. The plants have medium vigor, a spreading habit of growth, and loose medium sized fruit clusters. Menditoo is suggested for local market and home garden use because of its large fruit size and high quality.

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Farm Fillers

Off-farm income now accounts for about one-third of farmers' total net income, reports the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

Today's farm worker produces food and fiber for himself and 23 other persons. Five years ago he produced for himself and 17 others.

U. S. farm people are less than 1 percent of the world's population. But they produce one-fifth of the world's output of red meat and nearly one-third of the world's milk.

With heavier production of citrus fruits, supplies of fresh fruit should be larger in the first half of 1959 than they were a year earlier.

The poultry industry is expected to increase production in 1959 of eggs and tender young chickens for broiling and frying. Prices will probably be lower than in 1958.

U. S. milk production in 1959 will probably be more nearly in balance with demand than in any of the past six years. Production per cow is expected to increase to another new record high, says the U. S. Department of Agriculture, but total number of cows will decline. Increased consumption of milk products should more than compensate for a smaller increase in total production.

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Food Budgets Can Be Cut by Careful Shopping and Home Food Preparation

If you feel that food took too large a slice of your family income in 1958, chances are you can cut that expense in 1959 by spending a little more time in shopping and in food preparation.

Real savings are possible for the homemaker who is not pressed for time, say U. S. Department of Agriculture home economists (or State authorities). Part of the price of foods in today's markets is for special packaging, mixing, and other services designed to save time in food preparation. A homemaker who is willing to do without these "extras" and who can take time to shop for the least expensive forms of foods can feed her family well at less cost.

Three food plans drawn up by the Department's Institute of Home Economics show a variation in cost for feeding a family of four, with young school-age children, from $24 per week under the lowest cost plan to $37 per week under the most liberal plan (1958 prices). A moderate cost plan, between these two, calls for an average expenditure of $33 per week. All three plans provide enough food to give each family member an adequate diet and allow for some losses and discards, but more "extra" food is included in the more liberal plans.

A copy of these plans for various size families and a discussion of their development is available free on request from the Institute of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington 25, D. C.

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USDA 3526-58

Here are a few general tips from USDA home economists on how to save money on food:

1. Among items with similar food values, as dark-green vegetables, select the least expensive. Comparisons should always be made on a cost-per-serving basis. Foods are cheapest when they are plentiful, so it pays to buy "in season."

2. Many foods can be bought in several different forms--for example, fresh, canned, frozen, dried. Since differences in nutritive value are small, the least expensive form will generally provide the same amount of food value for less money.

3. The use to be made of a food commodity should determine its grade. High-quality foods purchased in expensive forms are often used in ways where a lower grade or another form would have served as well.

4. Compare the cost of partially-prepared and ready-to-eat foods with similar foods prepared entirely at home. In purchasing the former, you are usually paying money for time saved in preparation. Also, for frequently-used foods that can be stored properly, large quantity purchases usually save money.

5. Finally, careful storage and preparation of foods cut losses through waste.

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Bigger Ewes Have Bigger Lambs

The size of a yearling ewe before first breeding is a good indication of how large her lambs will be, both at birth and at weaning time.

Tests at the U. S. Department of Agriculture's Southwestern Range and Sheep Breeding Laboratory at Fort Wingate, N. Mex., show that heavier ewes--regardless of breed--produce heavier, faster-growing lambs than lightweight ewes.

Quicker profits from breeding flocks should be possible as a result of this finding, say the USDA scientists, because culling can be done before breeding--rather than after each ewe has produced a lamb. In addition, the bigger ewes have more skin area for growing wool.

In the 4-year USDA tests, ewes were grouped by weight; the lightest group averaging 65.4 pounds as yearlings and the heaviest, 92.7 pounds. The heaviest group, with an average weight advantage of 27.3 pounds, produced lambs averaging 1.29 pounds more at birth and 10.5 pounds more at weaning.

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Farm Building Plans Available at Low Cost Through State Extension Service

Do your plans for 1959 include new farm buildings, animal shelters, or livestock handling equipment? Or do you hope to provide new living quarters for your family?

If building of any kind is on your mind for this year, _____ (State Extension Buildings Specialist) has a suggestion for you that may save time, effort and money. Working plans for most types of farm buildings, equipment and houses can be obtained through your State Extension Service. Pictures and brief descriptions of these plans can usually be obtained from County agricultural agents. Otherwise, write to _____ (State source), giving as much information as possible about the kind of building or structure that you wish to build.

These farm building plans, according to _____, are available throughout the United States through a cooperative exchange arrangement between State Agricultural Colleges and the U. S. Department of Agriculture. Plans are adapted to the climate and the farming of the region in which they are distributed and are designed to fit the most up-to-date and efficient farm practices.

Farmhouse designs also are adapted by region. Some are expansible or can be divided inside and finished in stages as additional labor or money becomes available. Designed especially to meet the needs of farm families or families living in farming areas, the plans generally provide extra workroom space for home food preparation and preserving, and special wash-up rooms for outdoor workers.

Modern 1-to-4 bedroom designs for masonry or frame construction are grouped according to basic arrangement of living, working, and sleeping quarters. Most are single-level designs, but a few split-level or two-floor plans are included.

A small charge for detailed working plans and specifications covers the cost of printing, handling and distribution.*

*A few States distribute plans free of charge. Your buildings specialist will know the distribution arrangement in your State.

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